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DETAILS INSIDE
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THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
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THE DAY KITTY PRYDE LEAVES THE X-MEN, IS THE DAY THE X-MEN FALL!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE UNCANNY X-MEN!™

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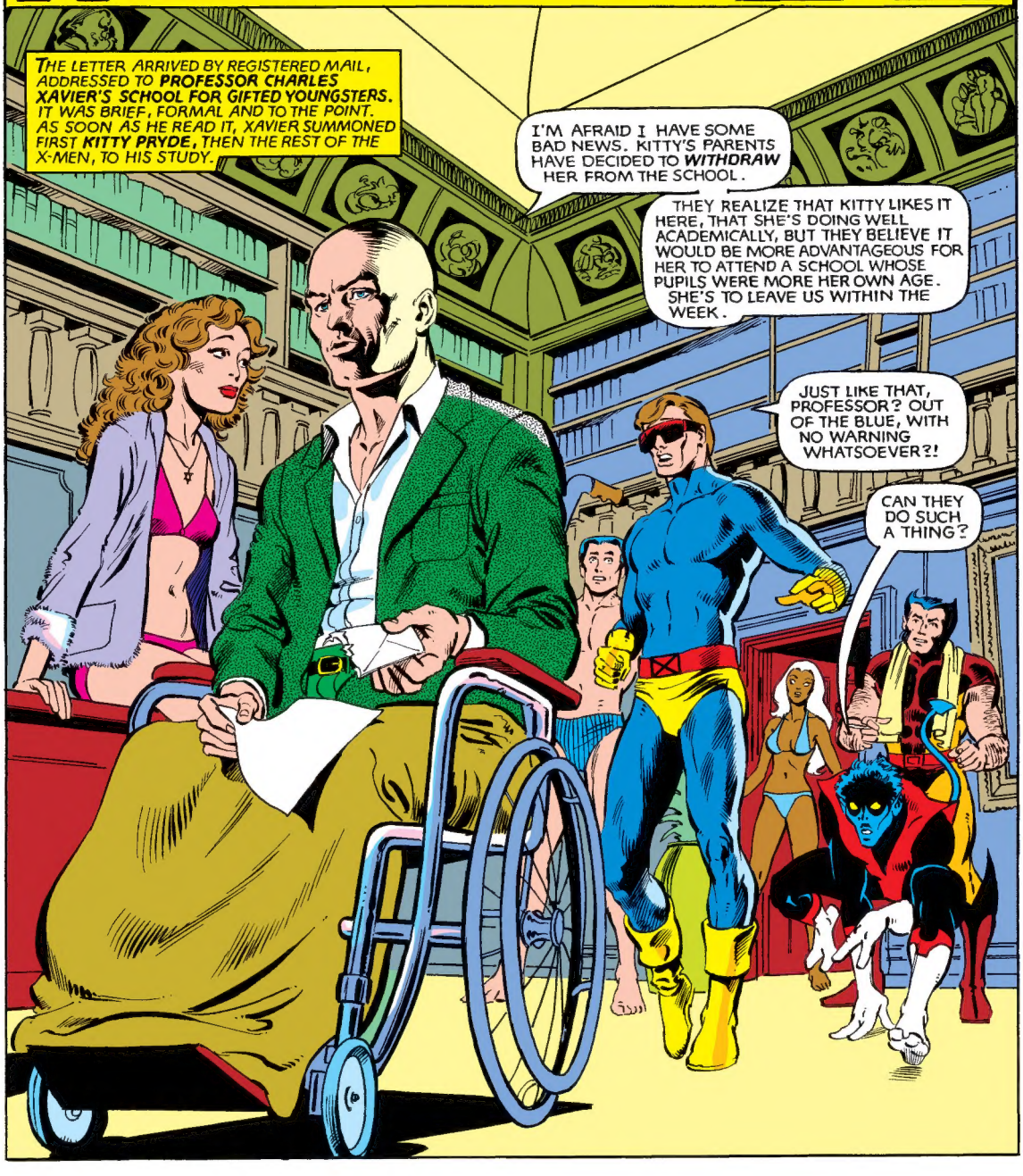
X-MEN MINUS ONE!



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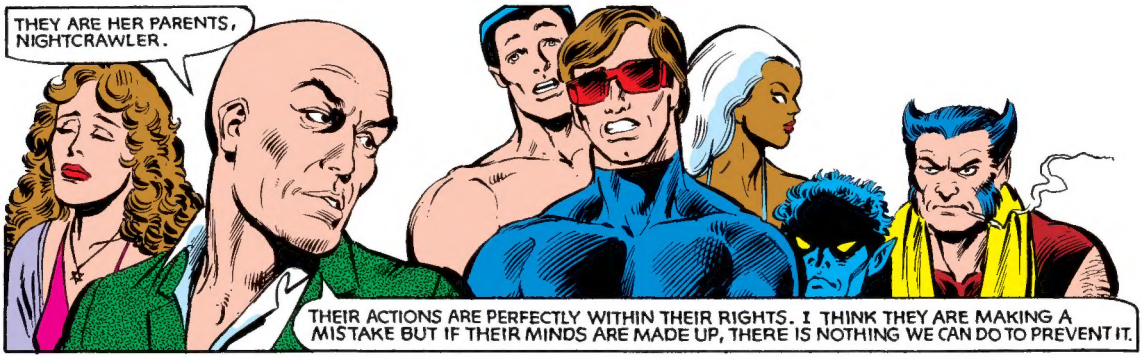
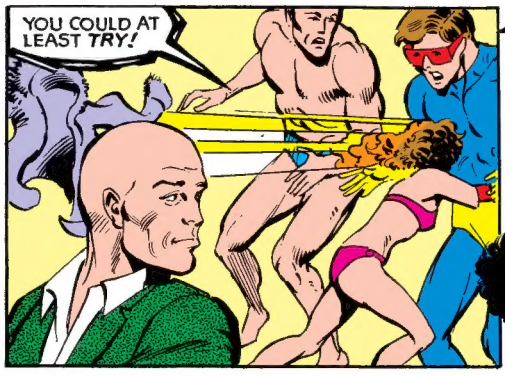
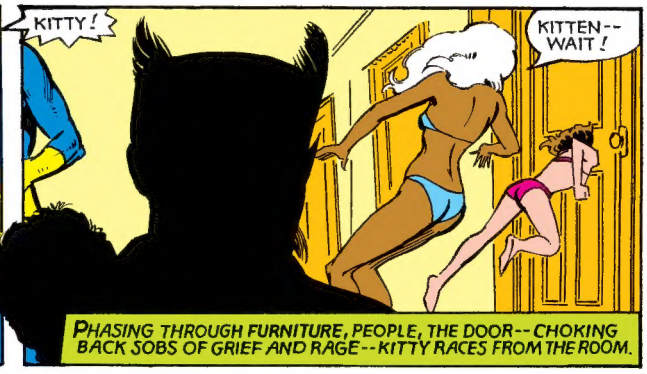
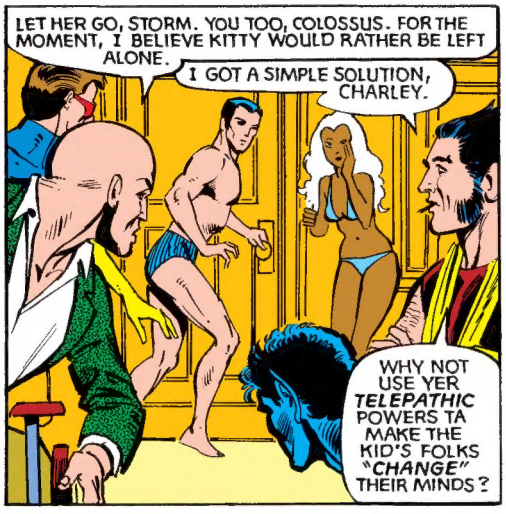
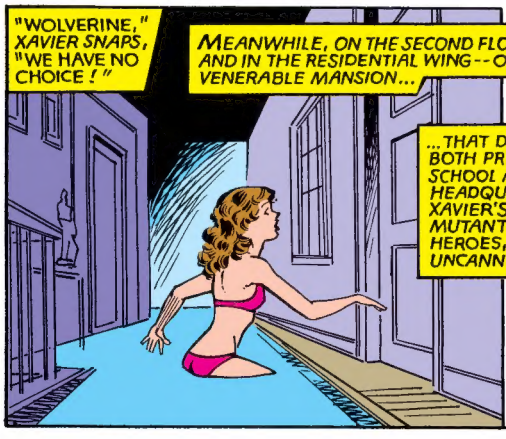

THEY ARE HER PARENTS, NIGHTCRAWLER.
THEIR ACTIONS ARE PERFECTLY WITHIN THEIR RIGHTS. I THINK THEY ARE MAKING A MISTAKE BUT IF THEIR MINDS ARE MADE UP, THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO TO PREVENT IT.

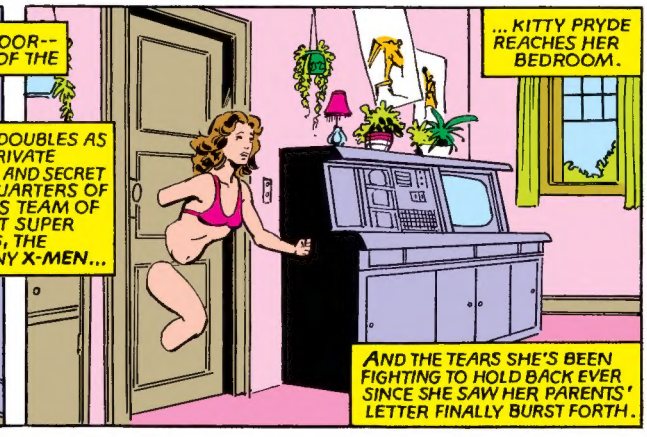

YOU COULD AT LEAST TRY!


KITTY!
KITTEN-- WAIT!
PHASING THROUGH FURNITURE, PEOPLE, THE DOOR--CHOKING BACK SOBS OF GRIEF AND RAGE--KITTY RACES FROM THE ROOM.


LET HER GO, STORM. YOU TOO, COLOSSUS. FOR THE MOMENT, I BELIEVE KITTY WOULD RATHER BE LEFT ALONE.
I GOT A SIMPLE SOLUTION, CHARLEY.
WHY NOT USE YER TELEPATHIC POWERS TA MAKE THE KID'S FOLKS "CHANGE" THEIR MINDS?

I MAY HAVE INDULGED IN SUCH TACTICS IN THE PAST, WOLVERINE, BUT NO MORE. TO DELIBERATELY MANIPULATE A SENTIENT MIND...
...WOULD MAKE ME NO BETTER THAN THE VILLAINS WE OPPOSE.
SO YOU'RE JUST GONNA LET THE KID GO.

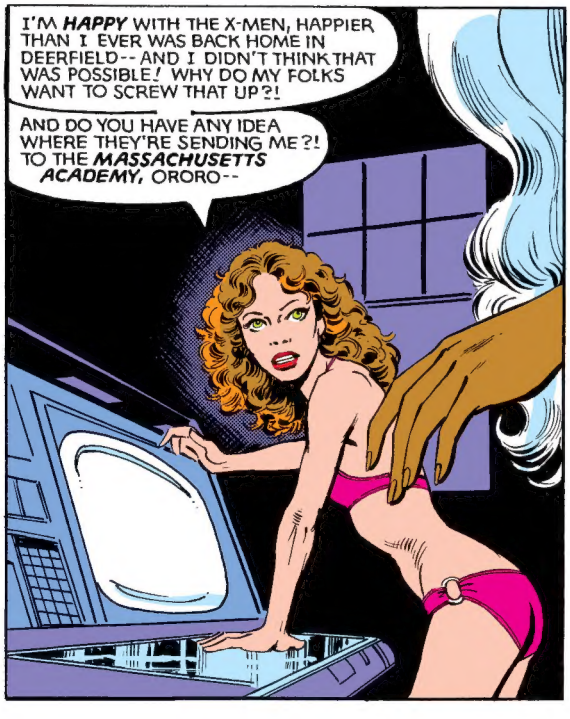

"WOLVERINE," XAVIER SNAPS, "WE HAVE NO CHOICE!"
MEANWHILE, ON THE SECOND FLOOR--AND IN THE RESIDENTIAL WING--OF THE VENERABLE MANSION...
...THAT DOUBLES AS BOTH PRIVATE SCHOOL AND SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF XAVIER'S TEAM OF MUTANT SUPER HEROES, THE UNCANNY X-MEN...


...KITTY PRYDE REACHES HER BEDROOM.
AND THE TEARS SHE'S BEEN FIGHTING TO HOLD BACK EVER SINCE SHE SAW HER PARENTS' LETTER FINALLY BURST FORTH.

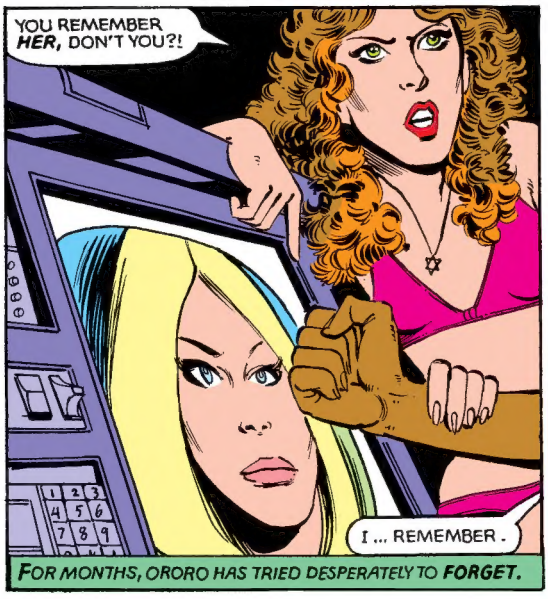
HOURS LATER...
KITTEN?
KITTY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? YOU DIDN'T COME DOWN FOR SUPPER.
'M NOT HUNGRY.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TALK?
NO.

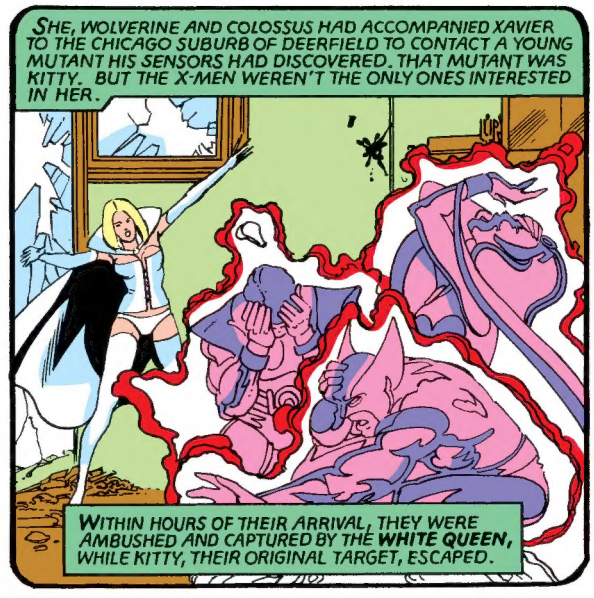
IT ISN'T LIKE YOU TO SULK.
'M NOT SULKING. I JUST WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE.
I UNDERSTAND, KITTEN.

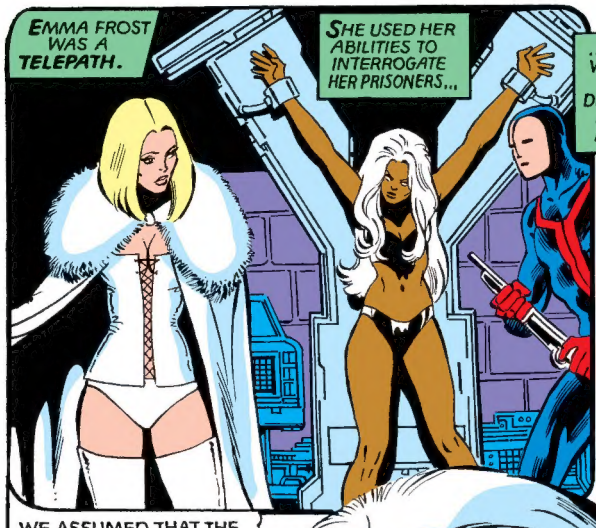
WELL, I DON'T!
KITTY!
GODDESS ABOVE, HER PHASING CAN BE AS DISCONCERTING AS NIGHT-CRAWLER'S ABILITY TO TELEPORT!

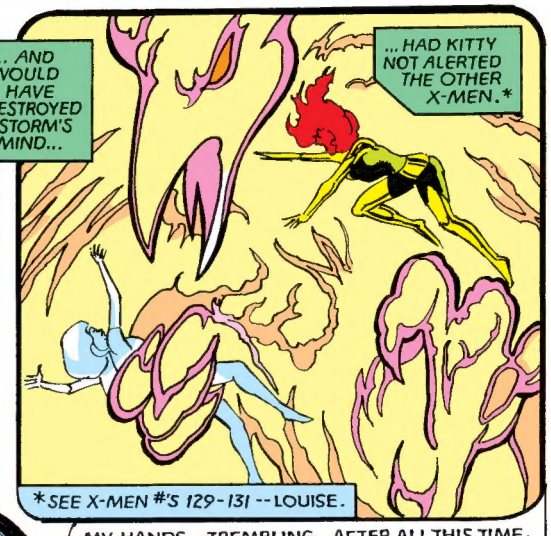

I'M HAPPY WITH THE X-MEN, HAPPIER THAN I EVER WAS BACK HOME IN DEERFIELD-- AND I DIDN'T THINK THAT WAS POSSIBLE! WHY DO MY FOLKS WANT TO SCREW THAT UP?!
AND DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE THEY'RE SENDING ME?! TO THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY, OROROO--

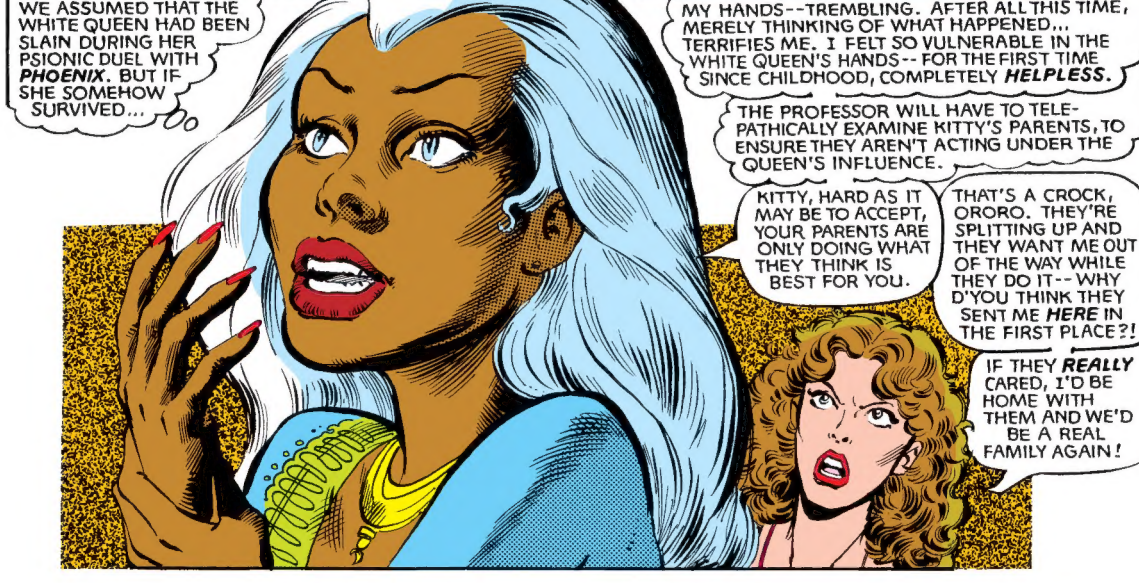
--WHOSE HEADMISTRESS IS EMMA FROST-- THE WHITE QUEEN OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB!

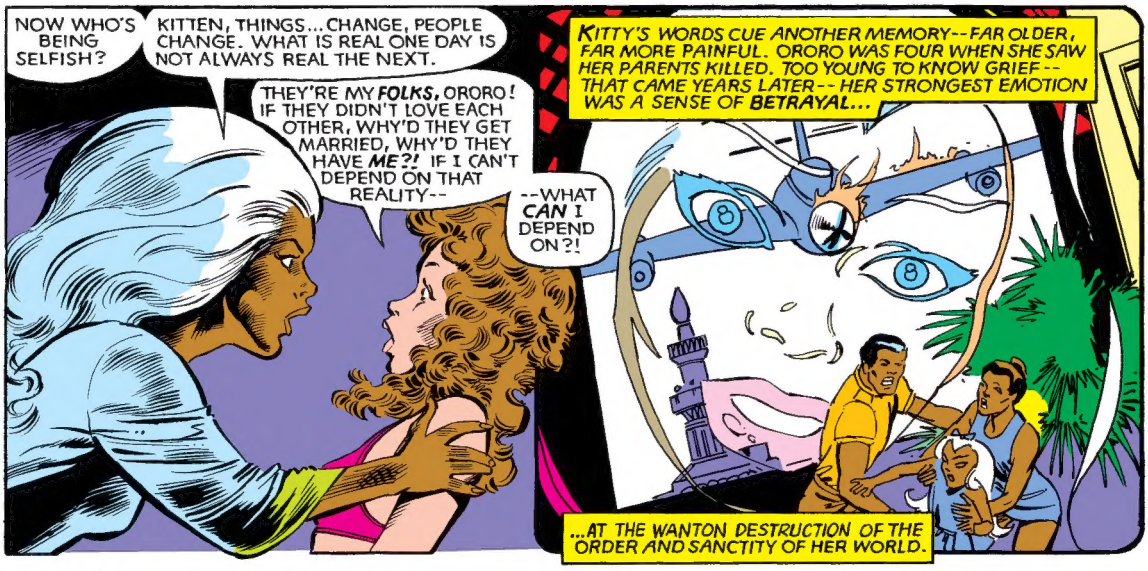

YOU REMEMBER HER, DON'T YOU?!
I ... REMEMBER.
FOR MONTHS, ORORO HAS TRIED DESPERATELY TO FORGET.


SHE, WOLVERINE AND COLOSSUS HAD ACCOMPANIED XAVIER TO THE CHICAGO SUBURB OF DEERFIELD TO CONTACT A YOUNG MUTANT HIS SENSORS HAD DISCOVERED. THAT MUTANT WAS KITTY. BUT THE X-MEN WEREN'T THE ONLY ONES INTERESTED IN HER.
WITHIN HOURS OF THEIR ARRIVAL, THEY WERE AMBUSHED AND CAPTURED BY THE WHITE QUEEN, WHILE KITTY, THEIR ORIGINAL TARGET, ESCAPED.


EMMA FROST WAS A TELEPATH.
SHE USED HER ABILITIES TO INTERROGATE HER PRISONERS...
... AND WOULD HAVE DESTROYED STORM'S MIND...

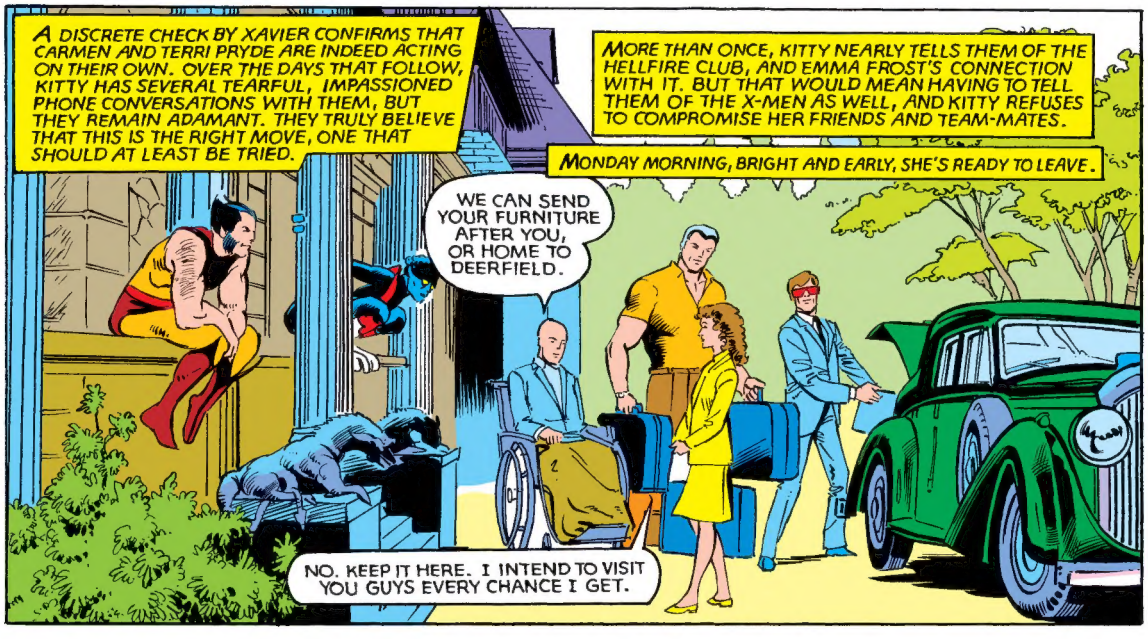

... HAD KITTY NOT ALERTED THE OTHER X-MEN.*
*SEE X-MEN #'S 129-131 --LOUISE.

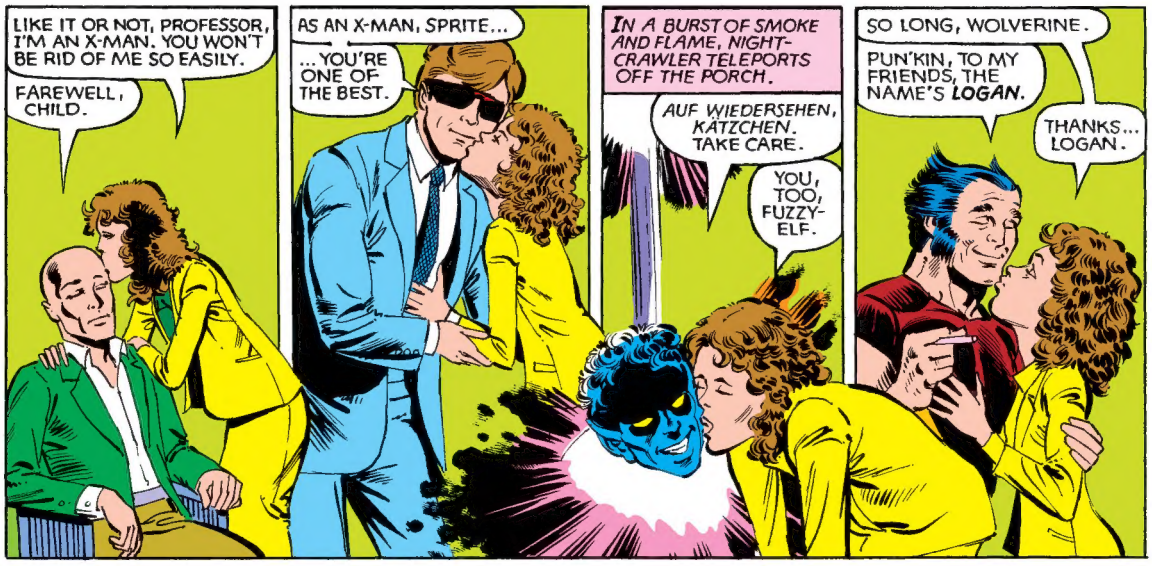

WE ASSUMED THAT THE WHITE QUEEN HAD BEEN SLAIN DURING HER PSIONIC DUEL WITH PHOENIX. BUT IF SHE SOMEHOW SURVIVED...
MY HANDS--TREMBLING. AFTER ALL THIS TIME, MERELY THINKING OF WHAT HAPPENED... TERRIFIES ME. I FELT SO VULNERABLE IN THE WHITE QUEEN'S HANDS-- FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE CHILDHOOD, COMPLETELY HELPLESS.
THE PROFESSOR WILL HAVE TO TELEPATHICALLY EXAMINE KITTY'S PARENTS, TO ENSURE THEY AREN'T ACTING UNDER THE QUEEN'S INFLUENCE.
KITTY, HARD AS IT MAY BE TO ACCEPT, YOUR PARENTS ARE ONLY DOING WHAT THEY THINK IS BEST FOR YOU.
THAT'S A CROCK, ORORO. THEY'RE SPLITTING UP AND THEY WANT ME OUT OF THE WAY WHILE THEY DO IT-- WHY D'YOU THINK THEY SENT ME HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE?!
IF THEY REALLY CARED, I'D BE HOME WITH THEM AND WE'D BE A REAL FAMILY AGAIN!

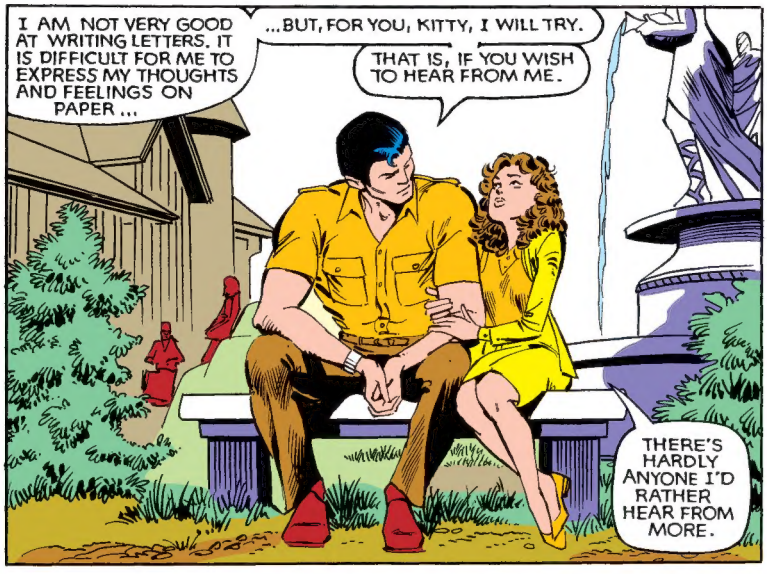

NOW WHO'S BEING SELFISH?
KITTEN, THINGS...CHANGE, PEOPLE CHANGE. WHAT IS REAL ONE DAY IS NOT ALWAYS REAL THE NEXT.
THEY'RE MY FOLKS, ORORO! IF THEY DIDN'T LOVE EACH OTHER, WHY'D THEY GET MARRIED, WHY'D THEY HAVE ME?! IF I CAN'T DEPEND ON THAT REALITY--
--WHAT CAN I DEPEND ON?!
KITTY'S WORDS CUE ANOTHER MEMORY--FAR OLDER, FAR MORE PAINFUL. ORORO WAS FOUR WHEN SHE SAW HER PARENTS KILLED. TOO YOUNG TO KNOW GRIEF--THAT CAME YEARS LATER--HER STRONGEST EMOTION WAS A SENSE OF BETRAYAL...
...AT THE WANTON DESTRUCTION OF THE ORDER AND SANCTITY OF HER WORLD.

I WISH I KNEW, KITTEN.
I'M FRIGHTENED, ORORO.
WILL... WILL YOU EVER STOP LOVING ME?

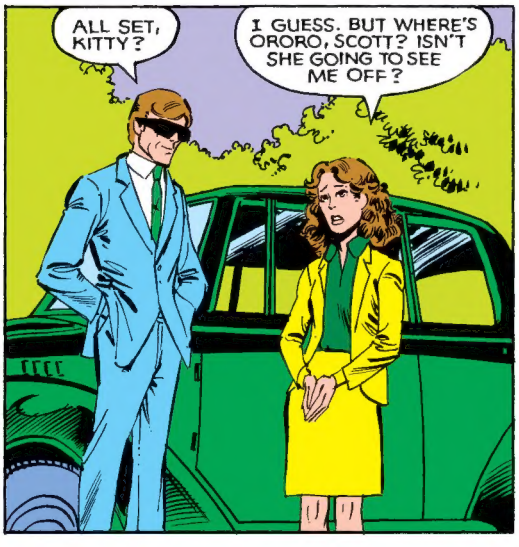
Oohhhhh, MY DARLING--PERHAPS WHEN I DIE.
LIFE IS VERY LONELY, KITTY.
TO LIVE IT WELL, YOU MUST BE STRONG ENOUGH TO TRUST, TO RISK, TO...FORGIVE. YOUR PARENTS DO LOVE YOU.
I S'POSE. I HURT, ORORO.
YOU'RE GROWING UP.

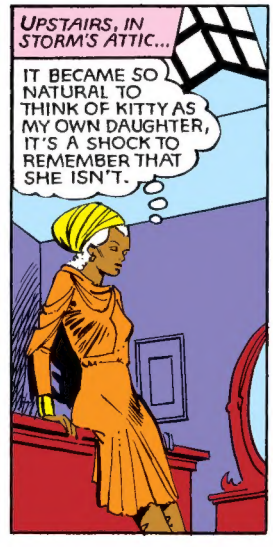

A DISCRETE CHECK BY XAVIER CONFIRMS THAT CARMEN AND TERRI PRYDE ARE INDEED ACTING ON THEIR OWN. OVER THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, KITTY HAS SEVERAL TEARFUL, IMPASSIONED PHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH THEM, BUT THEY REMAIN ADAMANT. THEY TRULY BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE RIGHT MOVE, ONE THAT SHOULD AT LEAST BE TRIED.
MORE THAN ONCE, KITTY NEARLY TELLS THEM OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB, AND EMMA FROST'S CONNECTION WITH IT. BUT THAT WOULD MEAN HAVING TO TELL THEM OF THE X-MEN AS WELL, AND KITTY REFUSES TO COMPROMISE HER FRIENDS AND TEAM-MATES.
MONDAY MORNING, BRIGHT AND EARLY, SHE'S READY TO LEAVE.
WE CAN SEND YOUR FURNITURE AFTER YOU, OR HOME TO DEERFIELD.
NO. KEEP IT HERE. I INTEND TO VISIT YOU GUYS EVERY CHANCE I GET.

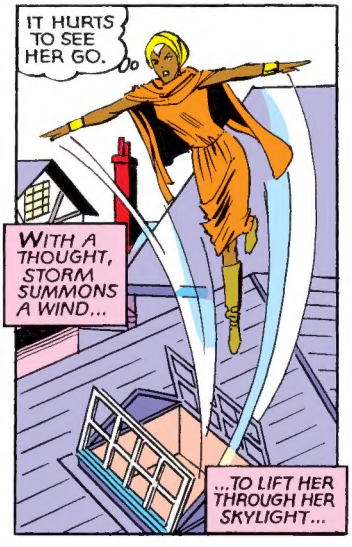

LIKE IT OR NOT, PROFESSOR, I'M AN X-MAN. YOU WON'T BE RID OF ME SO EASILY.
FAREWELL, CHILD.
AS AN X-MAN, SPRITE...
...YOU'RE ONE OF THE BEST.
IN A BURST OF SMOKE AND FLAME, NIGHT-CRAWLER TELEPORTS OFF THE PORCH.
AUF WIEDERSEHEN, KATZCHEN. TAKE CARE.
YOU, TOO, FUZZY-ELF.
SO LONG, WOLVERINE.
PUN'KIN, TO MY FRIENDS, THE NAME'S LOGAN.
THANKS... LOGAN.


I AM NOT VERY GOOD AT WRITING LETTERS. IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO EXPRESS MY THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ON PAPER...
...BUT, FOR YOU, KITTY, I WILL TRY.
THAT IS, IF YOU WISH TO HEAR FROM ME.
THERE'S HARDLY ANYONE I'D RATHER HEAR FROM MORE.

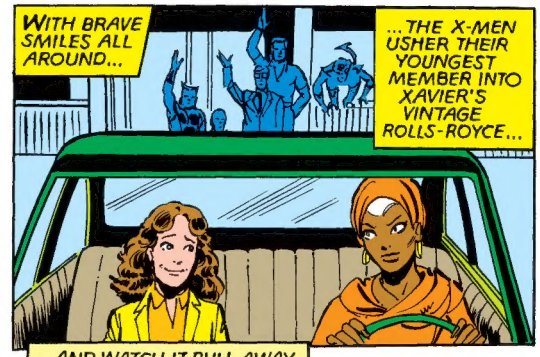
G'BYE, PETER!

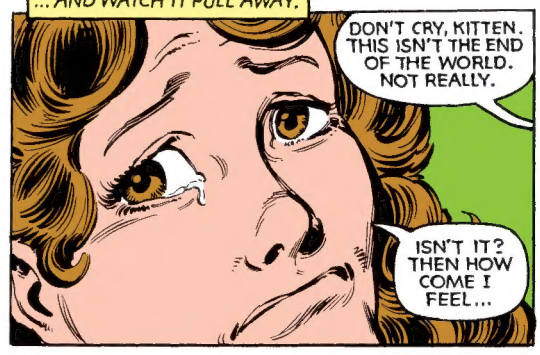

ALL SET, KITTY?
I GUESS. BUT WHERE'S ORORO, SCOTT? ISN'T SHE GOING TO SEE ME OFF?


UPSTAIRS, IN STORM'S ATTIC...
IT BECAME SO NATURAL TO THINK OF KITTY AS MY OWN DAUGHTER, IT'S A SHOCK TO REMEMBER THAT SHE ISN'T.

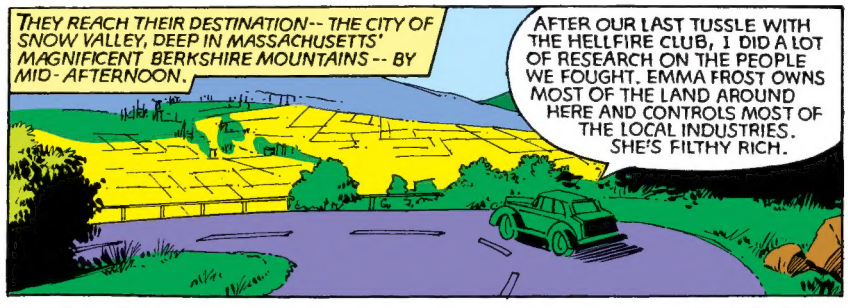

IT HURTS TO SEE HER GO.
WITH A THOUGHT, STORM SUMMONS A WIND...
...TO LIFT HER THROUGH HER SKYLIGHT...

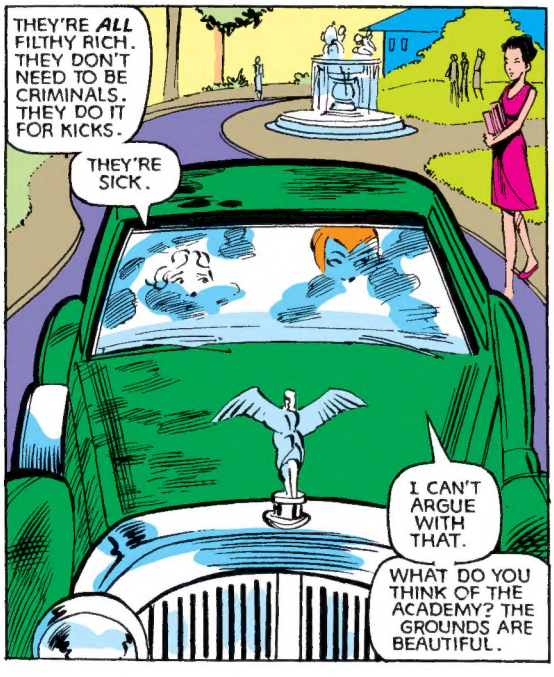
... AND DOWN TO HER FRIENDS.
PROFESSOR, I WOULD ASK A FAVOR. MAY I DRIVE KITTY TO HER NEW SCHOOL?
YEAH!
I HAVE NO OBJECTIONS. SCOTT?
IT'S FINE WITH ME. IT'LL BE A LONG TRIP, THOUGH, AND POSSIBLY A DANGEROUS ONE. DO YOU WANT COMPANY, ORORO?
I CAN MANAGE, THANK YOU.


WITH BRAVE SMILES ALL AROUND...
...THE X-MEN USHER THEIR YOUNGEST MEMBER INTO XAVIER'S VINTAGE ROLLS-ROYCE...


... AND WATCH IT PULL AWAY.
DON'T CRY, KITTEN. THIS ISN'T THE END OF THE WORLD. NOT REALLY.
ISN'T IT? THEN HOW COME I FEEL...

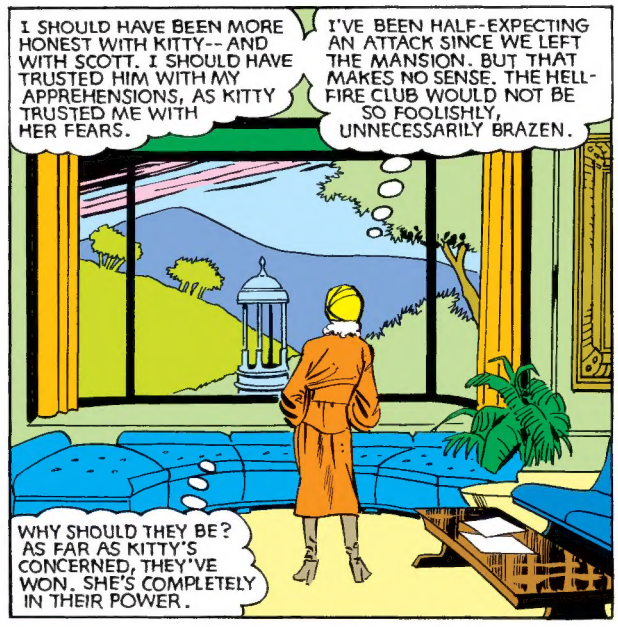
...LIKE I'LL NEVER SEE ANY OF YOU AGAIN?

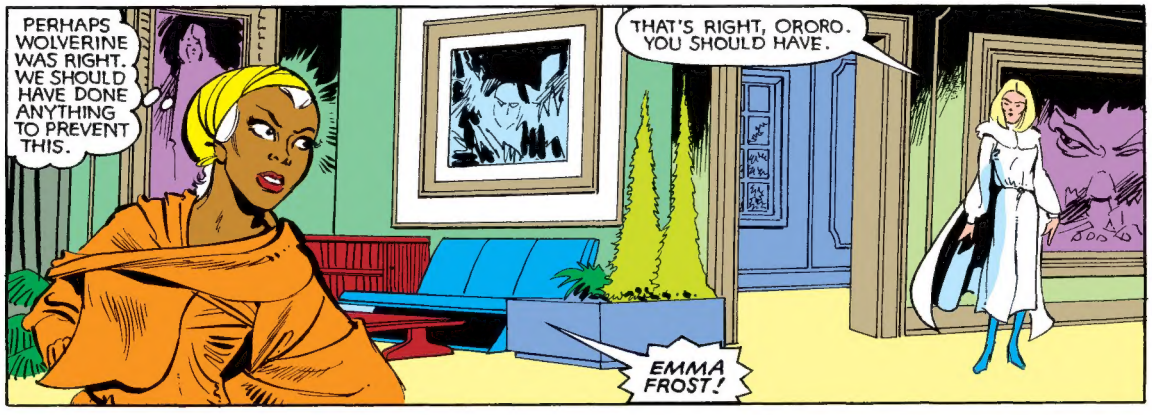

THEY REACH THEIR DESTINATION-- THE CITY OF SNOW VALLEY, DEEP IN MASSACHUSETTS' MAGNIFICENT BERKSHIRE MOUNTAINS -- BY MID-AFTERNOON.
AFTER OUR LAST TUSSLE WITH THE HELLFIRE CLUB, I DID A LOT OF RESEARCH ON THE PEOPLE WE FOUGHT. EMMA FROST OWNS MOST OF THE LAND AROUND HERE AND CONTROLS MOST OF THE LOCAL INDUSTRIES. SHE'S FILTHY RICH.


THEY'RE ALL FILTHY RICH. THEY DON'T NEED TO BE CRIMINALS. THEY DO IT FOR KICKS.
THEY'RE SICK.
I CAN'T ARGUE WITH THAT.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE ACADEMY? THE GROUNDS ARE BEAUTIFUL.

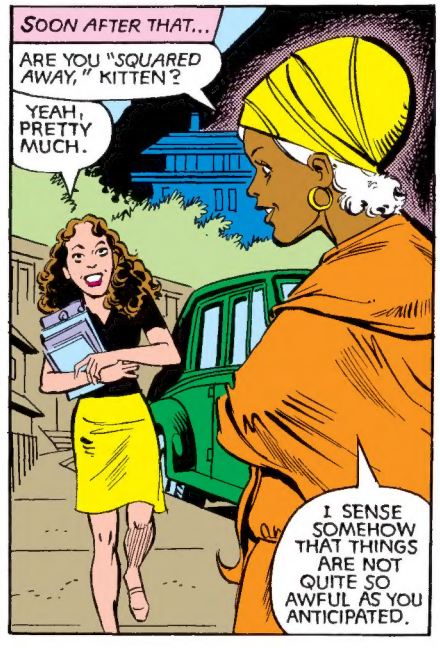
THE CAMPUS IS PERFECT. THE STUDENTS ARE PERFECT. I HATE IT. I KNOW THE PROFESSOR WANTED ME TO DRESS NICELY...
...TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION, BUT I WISH I'D WORN MY OLDEST, MOST FRAYED, MOST COMFORTABLE PAIR OF JEANS. EVERYONE I SEE LOOKS ALIKE-- A SCHOOL OF PREPPIE, ZOMBIE CLONES. YUCK!

DOMINATING THE CAMPUS-- AND INDEED, THE ENTIRE VALLEY-- IS THE SCHOOL'S ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.
WELCOME, KATHERINE. WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.
COME WITH ME, DEAR. WE'LL GET YOU SQUARED AWAY. YOUR FRIEND CAN WAIT FOR YOU IN THIS LOUNGE.

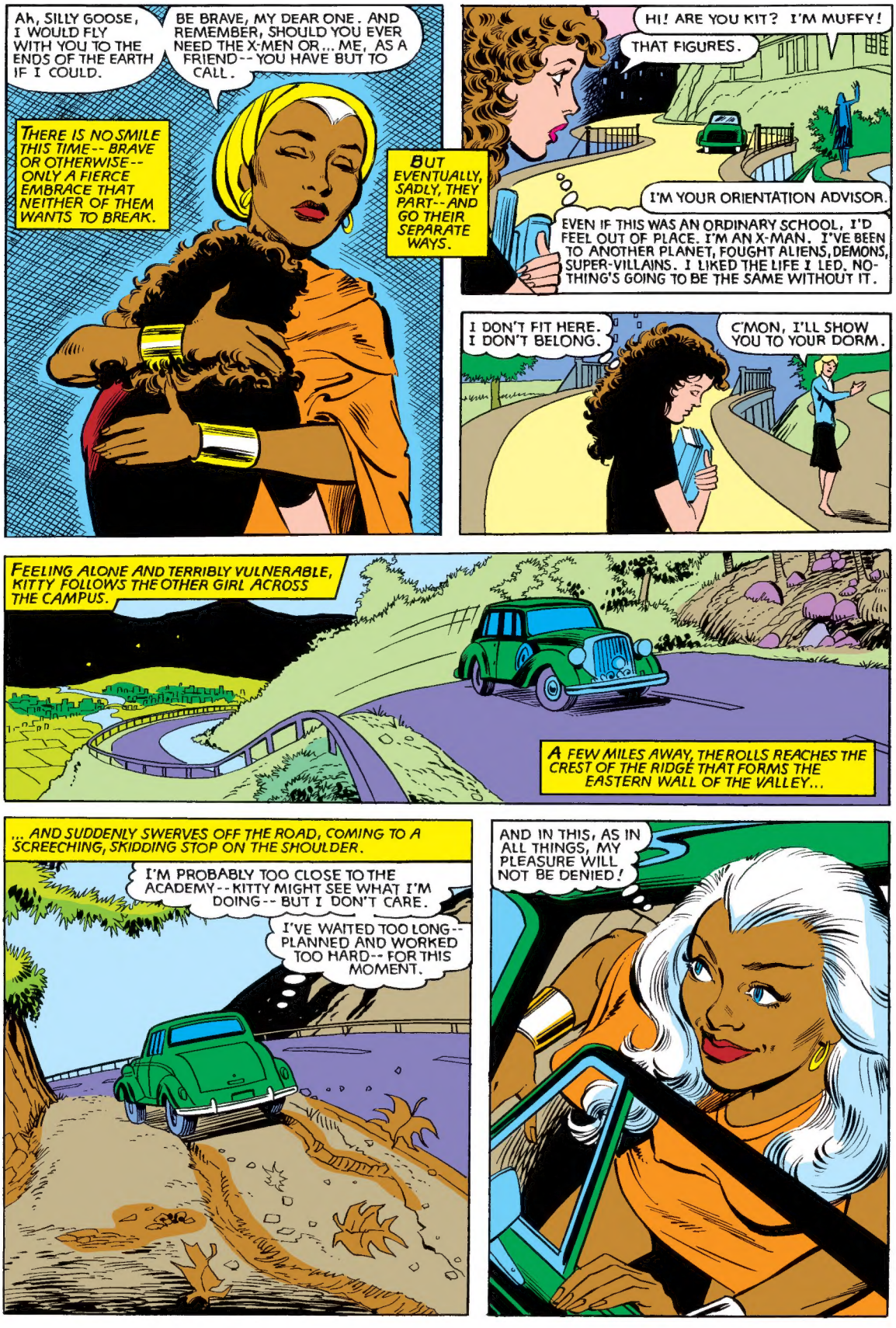

I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE HONEST WITH KITTY-- AND WITH SCOTT. I SHOULD HAVE TRUSTED HIM WITH MY APPREHENSIONS, AS KITTY TRUSTED ME WITH HER FEARS.
I'VE BEEN HALF-EXPECTING AN ATTACK SINCE WE LEFT THE MANSION. BUT THAT MAKES NO SENSE. THE HELL-FIRE CLUB WOULD NOT BE SO FOOLISHLY, UNNECESSARILY BRAZEN.
WHY SHOULD THEY BE? AS FAR AS KITTY'S CONCERNED, THEY'VE WON. SHE'S COMPLETELY IN THEIR POWER.

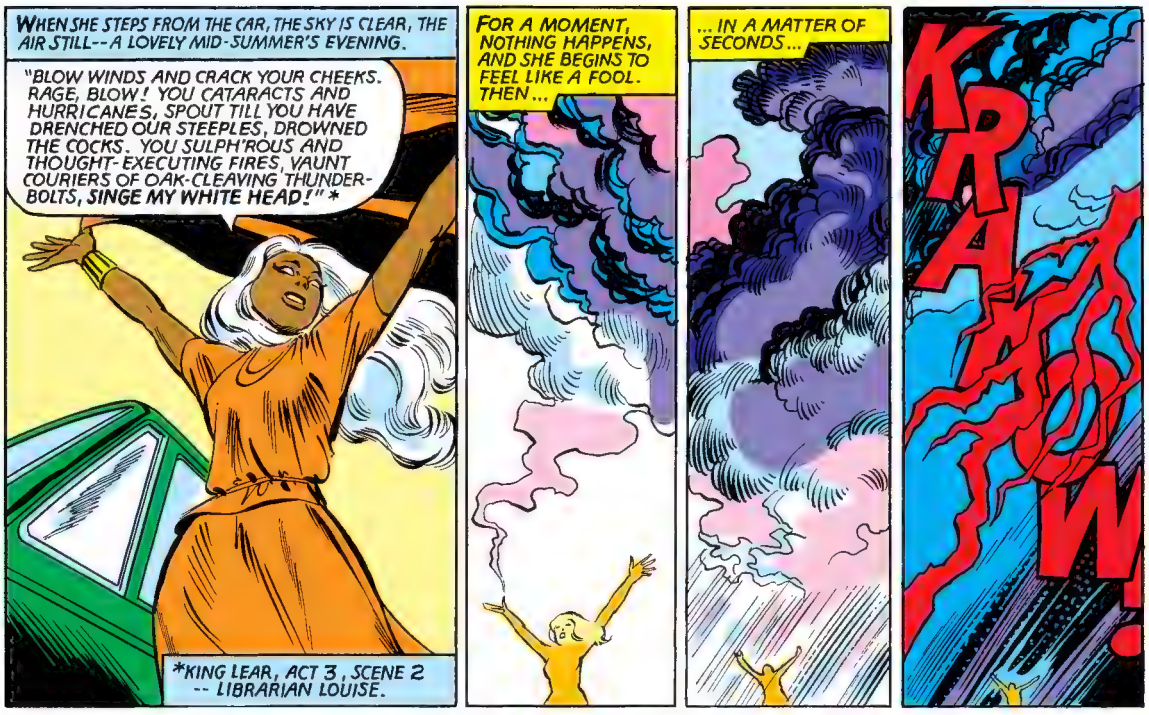

PERHAPS WOLVERINE WAS RIGHT. WE SHOULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING TO PREVENT THIS.
THAT'S RIGHT, ORORO. YOU SHOULD HAVE.
EMMA FROST!

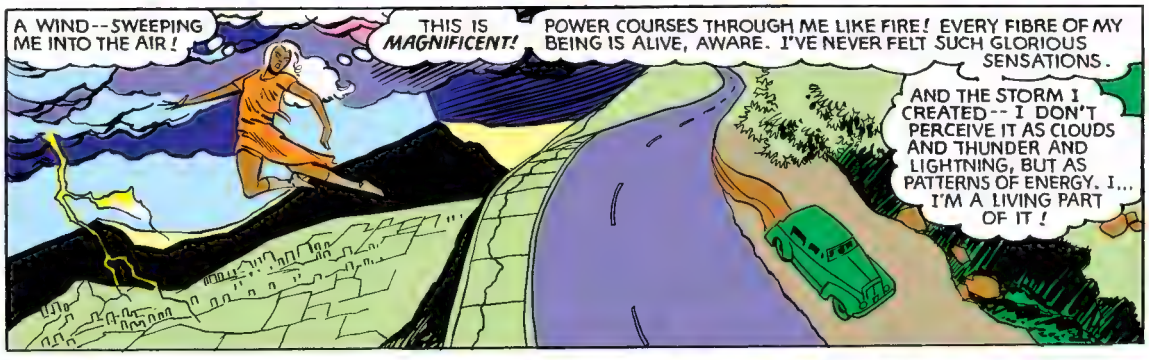
LIGHT FLARES STAR-BRIGHT IN THE ROOM...
...AND HEADS LOOK UPWARDS IN CONFUSION AND ALARM AS A PEAL OF THUNDER RUMBLES ACROSS THE CLOUDLESS SKY.

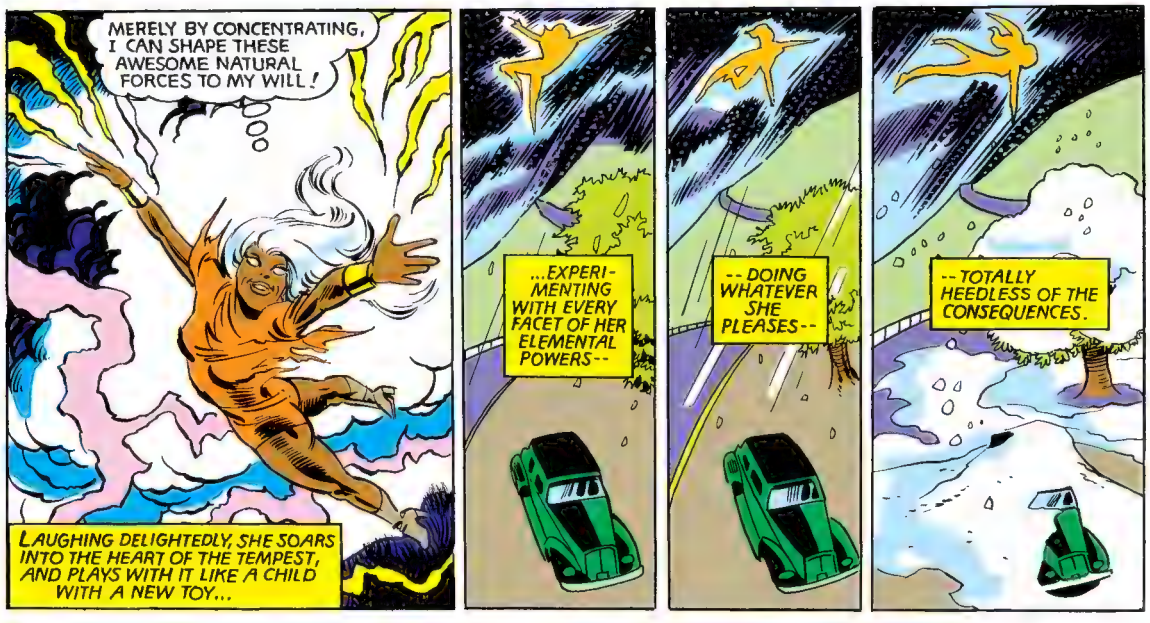

SOON AFTER THAT...
ARE YOU "SQUARED AWAY," KITTEN?
YEAH, PRETTY MUCH.
I SENSE SOMEHOW THAT THINGS ARE NOT QUITE SO AWFUL AS YOU ANTICIPATED.

NAH. THEY'RE WAITING 'TIL YOU LEAVE BEFORE WHEELING OUT THE RACK AND THUMB-SCREWS.
I MUST LEAVE, YOU KNOW.
IT'S A LONG TRIP HOME, ORORO. WANT SOME COMPANY?

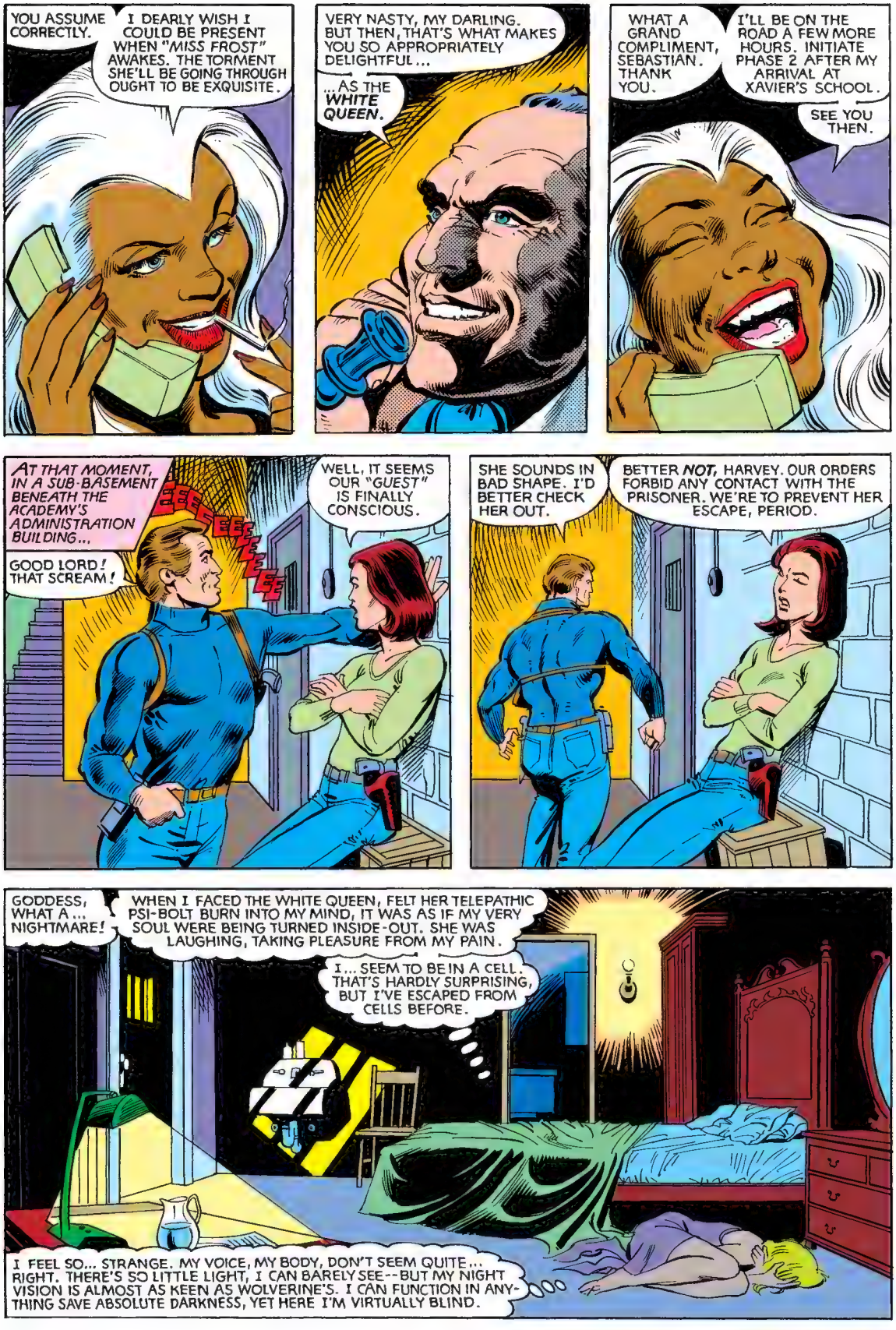

Ah, SILLY GOOSE, I WOULD FLY WITH YOU TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH IF I COULD.
BE BRAVE, MY DEAR ONE. AND REMEMBER, SHOULD YOU EVER NEED THE X-MEN OR... ME, AS A FRIEND-- YOU HAVE BUT TO CALL.
THERE IS NO SMILE THIS TIME-- BRAVE OR OTHERWISE-- ONLY A FIERCE EMBRACE THAT NEITHER OF THEM WANTS TO BREAK.
BUT EVENTUALLY, SADLY, THEY PART--AND GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS.
HI! ARE YOU KIT? I'M MUFFY!
THAT FIGURES.
I'M YOUR ORIENTATION ADVISOR.
EVEN IF THIS WAS AN ORDINARY SCHOOL, I'D FEEL OUT OF PLACE. I'M AN X-MAN. I'VE BEEN TO ANOTHER PLANET, FOUGHT ALIENS, DEMONS, SUPER-VILLAINS. I LIKED THE LIFE I LED. NOTHING'S GOING TO BE THE SAME WITHOUT IT.
I DON'T FIT HERE. I DON'T BELONG.
C'MON, I'LL SHOW YOU TO YOUR DORM.
FEELING ALONE AND TERRIBLY VULNERABLE, KITTY FOLLOWS THE OTHER GIRL ACROSS THE CAMPUS.
A FEW MILES AWAY, THE ROLLS REACHES THE CREST OF THE RIDGE THAT FORMS THE EASTERN WALL OF THE VALLEY...
... AND SUDDENLY SWERVES OFF THE ROAD, COMING TO A SCREECHING, SKIDDING STOP ON THE SHOULDER.
I'M PROBABLY TOO CLOSE TO THE ACADEMY--KITTY MIGHT SEE WHAT I'M DOING-- BUT I DON'T CARE.
I'VE WAITED TOO LONG-- PLANNED AND WORKED TOO HARD-- FOR THIS MOMENT.
AND IN THIS, AS IN ALL THINGS, MY PLEASURE WILL NOT BE DENIED!

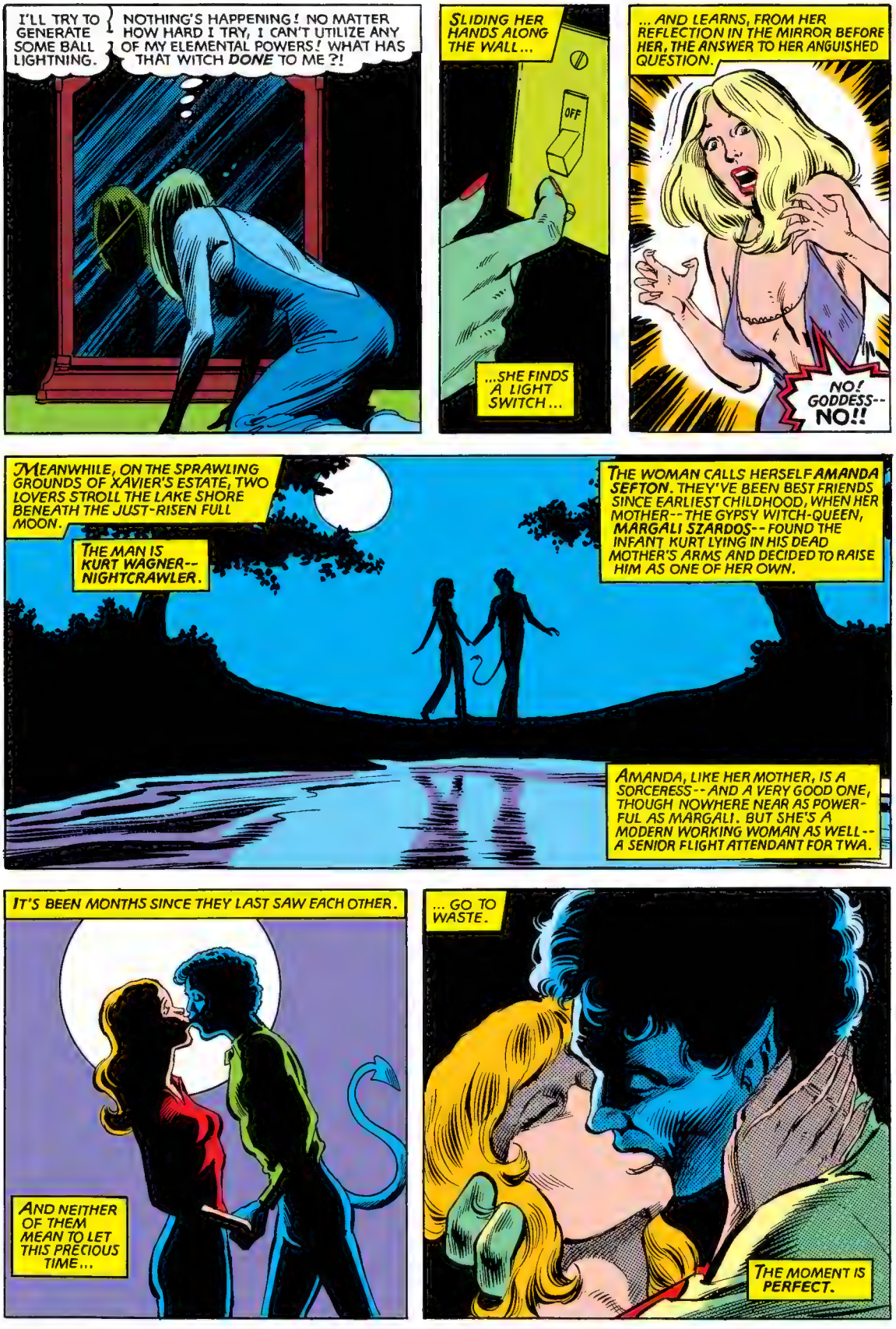

WHEN SHE STEPS FROM THE CAR, THE SKY IS CLEAR, THE AIR STILL--A LOVELY MID-SUMMER'S EVENING.
"BLOW WINDS AND CRACK YOUR CHEEKS. RAGE, BLOW! YOU CATARACTS AND HURRICANES, SPOUT TILL YOU HAVE DRENCHED OUR STEEPLES, DROWNED THE COCKS. YOU SULPH'ROUS AND THOUGHT-EXECUTING FIRES, VAUNT COURIERS OF OAK-CLEAVING THUNDER-BOLTS, SINGE MY WHITE HEAD!" *
*KING LEAR, ACT 3, SCENE 2 -- LIBRARIAN LOUISE.
FOR A MOMENT, NOTHING HAPPENS, AND SHE BEGINS TO FEEL LIKE A FOOL. THEN...
... IN A MATTER OF SECONDS...
KRAAAW!

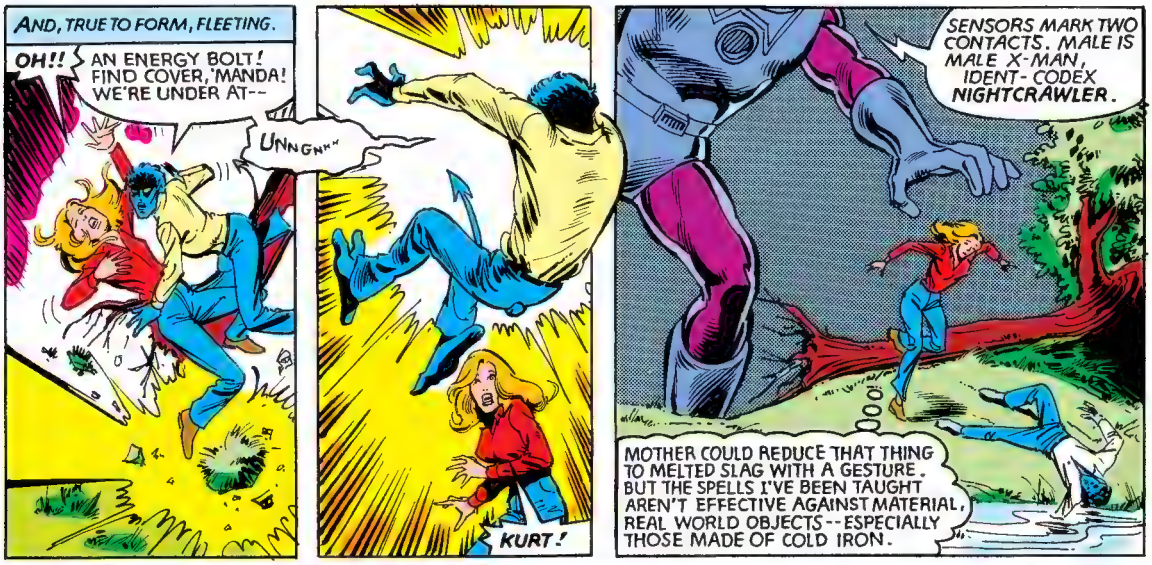

A WIND--SWEEPING ME INTO THE AIR!
THIS IS MAGNIFICENT!
POWER COURSES THROUGH ME LIKE FIRE! EVERY FIBRE OF MY BEING IS ALIVE, AWARE. I'VE NEVER FELT SUCH GLORIOUS SENSATIONS.
AND THE STORM I CREATED -- I DON'T PERCEIVE IT AS CLOUDS AND THUNDER AND LIGHTNING, BUT AS PATTERNS OF ENERGY. I... I'M A LIVING PART OF IT!

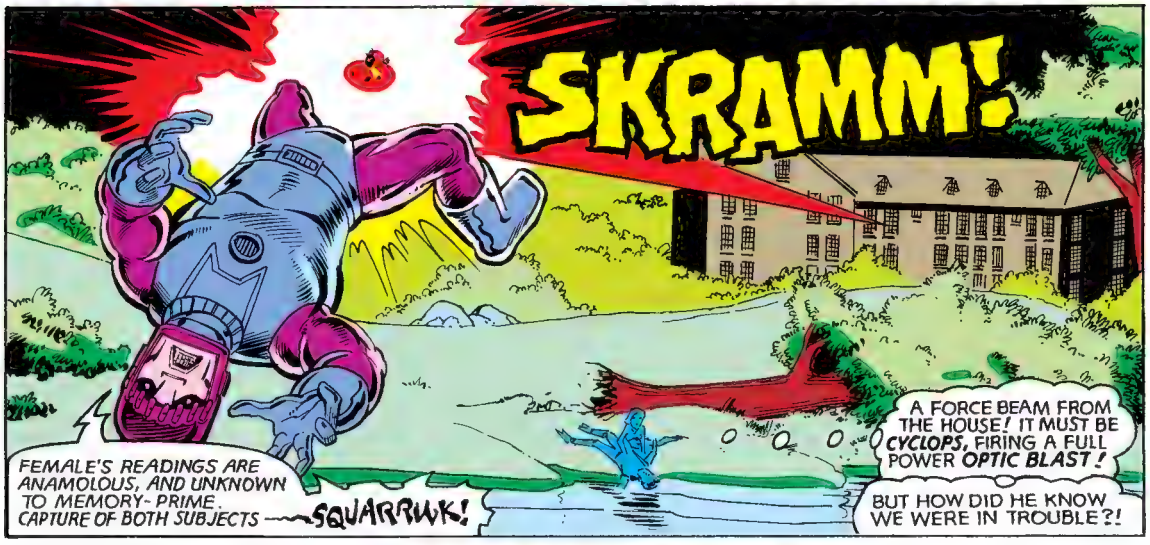

MERELY BY CONCENTRATING, I CAN SHAPE THESE AWESOME NATURAL FORCES TO MY WILL!
LAUGHING DELIGHTEDLY, SHE SOARS INTO THE HEART OF THE TEMPEST, AND PLAYS WITH IT LIKE A CHILD WITH A NEW TOY...
...EXPERIMENTING WITH EVERY FACET OF HER ELEMENTAL POWERS--
-- DOING WHATEVER SHE PLEASES--
-- TOTALLY HEEDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES.

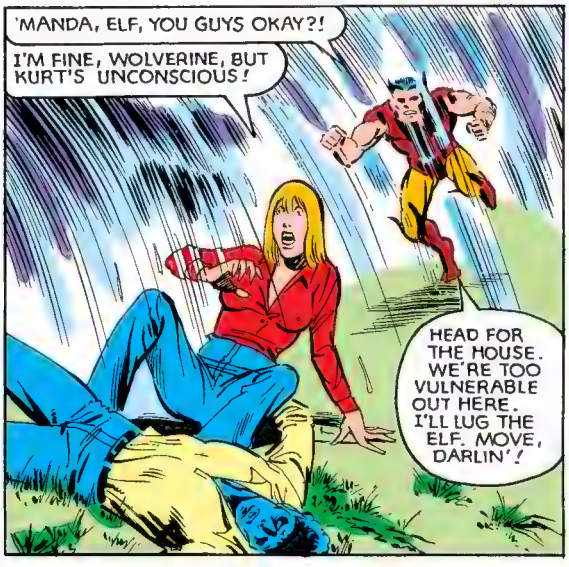
WHEN SHE LEARNS ALL SHE THINKS SHE NEEDS TO, SHE TRIES TO SEND THE STORM AWAY...
...ONLY TO DISCOVER -- LIKE THE MAN WHO GRABBED THE TIGER'S TAIL -- THAT SUCH FORCES ARE MORE EASILY SET IN MOTION THAN RESTRAINED.
SHE ACCEPTS THE CHALLENGE, PITTING HER HUMAN WILL AGAINST THE POWER OF NATURE GONE WILD.
THE STRUGGLE LEAVES HER EXHAUSTED, BUT AT ITS END...
... ALL IS ONCE MORE AS IT SHOULD BE.
IN THOSE LAST FEW MINUTES, I NEARLY LOST CONTROL. I MUST REMEMBER THAT I CANNOT CREATE SUCH EFFECTS OUT OF NOTHING. I MANIPULATE NATURAL WEATHER PATTERNS AT A FANTASTICALLY ACCELERATED RATE.
THAT REQUIRES ABSOLUTE PRECISION, TOTAL CONCENTRATION. IF I EVER LET THINGS GET OUT OF HAND--
--THE RESULTS COULD BE DEVASTATING.
STILL, THE EXPERIENCE WAS EXTRAORDINARY, THE ULTIMATE SENSUAL THRILL.
FOR A TIME, I BECAME ONE WITH THE EARTH ITSELF!
BUT ENOUGH OF THESE GAMES. I DID NOT BECOME STORM FOR MY OWN AMUSEMENT.
I HAVE WORK TO DO.
MOBILE OPERATOR, I SHOULD LIKE TO MAKE A PERSON-TO-PERSON CALL...
"...TO THE HELLFIRE CLUB."
SECONDS LATER, IN A VENERABLE MANSION ON NEW YORK CITY'S ULTRA-FASHIONABLE FIFTH AVENUE...
SEBASTIAN SHAW, HERE.
GOOD EVENING, SEBASTIAN. THIS IS ORORO. I'VE JUST DELIVERED KITTY PRYDE TO THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY AND I THOUGHT I'D RING AN...OLD FRIEND. YOU DON'T MIND.
NOT AT ALL. JUDGING FROM RECENT WEATHER REPORTS IN YOUR VICINITY...
...I ASSUME ALL IS GOING TO PLAN.

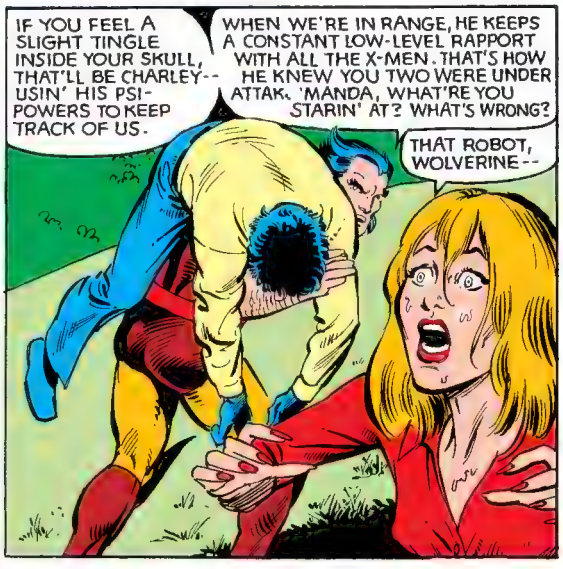

YOU ASSUME CORRECTLY.
I DEARLY WISH I COULD BE PRESENT WHEN "MISS FROST" AWAKES. THE TORMENT SHE'LL BE GOING THROUGH OUGHT TO BE EXQUISITE.
VERY NASTY, MY DARLING. BUT THEN, THAT'S WHAT MAKES YOU SO APPROPRIATELY DELIGHTFUL...
...AS THE WHITE QUEEN.
WHAT A GRAND COMPLIMENT, SEBASTIAN. THANK YOU.
I'LL BE ON THE ROAD A FEW MORE HOURS. INITIATE PHASE 2 AFTER MY ARRIVAL AT XAVIER'S SCHOOL.
SEE YOU THEN.
AT THAT MOMENT, IN A SUB-BASEMENT BENEATH THE ACADEMY'S ADMINISTRATION BUILDING...
EEEEEEEEEEEE
GOOD LORD! THAT SCREAM!
WELL, IT SEEMS OUR "GUEST" IS FINALLY CONSCIOUS.
SHE SOUNDS IN BAD SHAPE. I'D BETTER CHECK HER OUT.
BETTER NOT, HARVEY. OUR ORDERS FORBID ANY CONTACT WITH THE PRISONER. WE'RE TO PREVENT HER ESCAPE, PERIOD.
GODDESS, WHAT A... NIGHTMARE!
WHEN I FACED THE WHITE QUEEN, FELT HER TELEPATHIC PSI-BOLT BURN INTO MY MIND, IT WAS AS IF MY VERY SOUL WERE BEING TURNED INSIDE-OUT. SHE WAS LAUGHING, TAKING PLEASURE FROM MY PAIN.
I... SEEM TO BE IN A CELL. THAT'S HARDLY SURPRISING, BUT I'VE ESCAPED FROM CELLS BEFORE.
I FEEL SO... STRANGE. MY VOICE, MY BODY, DON'T SEEM QUITE... RIGHT. THERE'S SO LITTLE LIGHT, I CAN BARELY SEE--BUT MY NIGHT VISION IS ALMOST AS KEEN AS WOLVERINE'S. I CAN FUNCTION IN ANYTHING SAVE ABSOLUTE DARKNESS, YET HERE I'M VIRTUALLY BLIND.

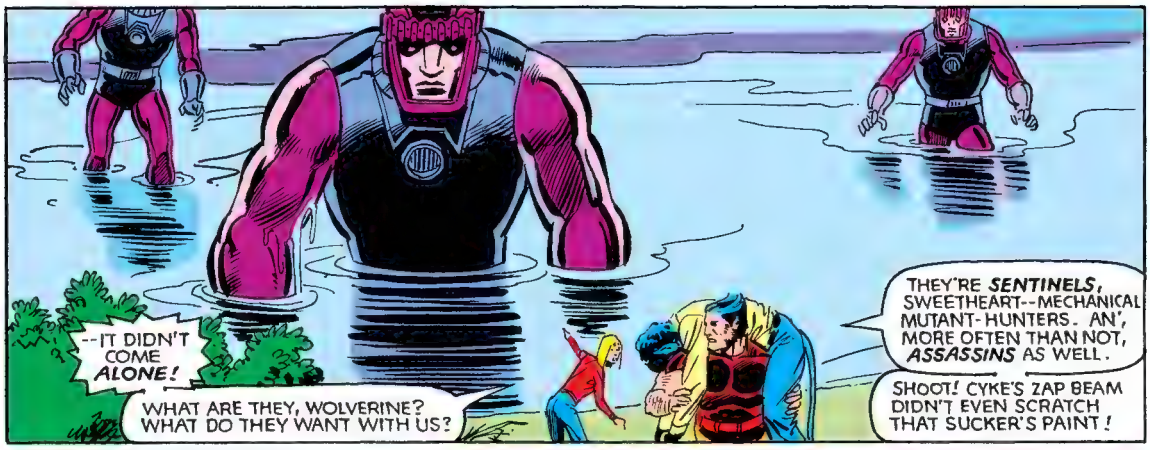

I'LL TRY TO GENERATE SOME BALL LIGHTNING.
NOTHING'S HAPPENING! NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, I CAN'T UTILIZE ANY OF MY ELEMENTAL POWERS! WHAT HAS THAT WITCH DONE TO ME?!
SLIDING HER HANDS ALONG THE WALL...
OFF
...SHE FINDS A LIGHT SWITCH...
... AND LEARNS, FROM HER REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR BEFORE HER, THE ANSWER TO HER ANGUISHED QUESTION.
NO! GODDESS-- NO!!
MEANWHILE, ON THE SPRAWLING GROUNDS OF XAVIER'S ESTATE, TWO LOVERS STROLL THE LAKE SHORE BENEATH THE JUST-RISEN FULL MOON.
THE MAN IS KURT WAGNER-- NIGHTCRAWLER.
THE WOMAN CALLS HERSELF AMANDA SEFTON. THEY'VE BEEN BEST FRIENDS SINCE EARLIEST CHILDHOOD, WHEN HER MOTHER--THE GYPSY WITCH-QUEEN, MARGALI SZARDOS--FOUND THE INFANT KURT LYING IN HIS DEAD MOTHER'S ARMS AND DECIDED TO RAISE HIM AS ONE OF HER OWN.
AMANDA, LIKE HER MOTHER, IS A SORCERESS--AND A VERY GOOD ONE, THOUGH NOWHERE NEAR AS POWERFUL AS MARGALI. BUT SHE'S A MODERN WORKING WOMAN AS WELL--A SENIOR FLIGHT ATTENDANT FOR TWA.
IT'S BEEN MONTHS SINCE THEY LAST SAW EACH OTHER.
AND NEITHER OF THEM MEAN TO LET THIS PRECIOUS TIME...
... GO TO WASTE.
THE MOMENT IS PERFECT.

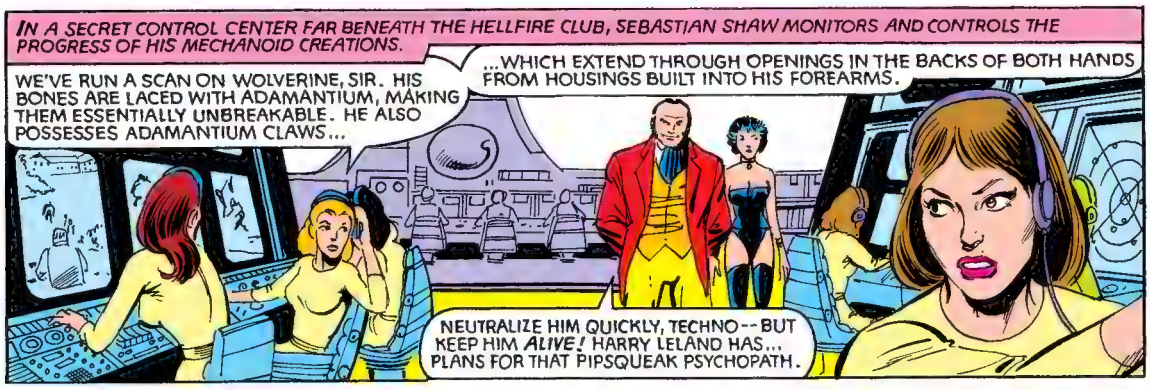

AND, TRUE TO FORM, FLEETING.
OH!!
AN ENERGY BOLT! FIND COVER, 'MANDA! WE'RE UNDER AT--
UNNGNH
KURT!
SENSORS MARK TWO CONTACTS. MALE IS MALE X-MAN, IDENT-CODEX NIGHTCRAWLER.
MOTHER COULD REDUCE THAT THING TO MELTED SLAG WITH A GESTURE. BUT THE SPELLS I'VE BEEN TAUGHT AREN'T EFFECTIVE AGAINST MATERIAL, REAL WORLD OBJECTS--ESPECIALLY THOSE MADE OF COLD IRON.


SKRAMM!
FEMALE'S READINGS ARE ANAMOLOUS, AND UNKNOWN TO MEMORY-PRIME. CAPTURE OF BOTH SUBJECTS
SQUARRWK!
A FORCE BEAM FROM THE HOUSE! IT MUST BE CYCLOPS, FIRING A FULL POWER OPTIC BLAST!
BUT HOW DID HE KNOW WE WERE IN TROUBLE?!

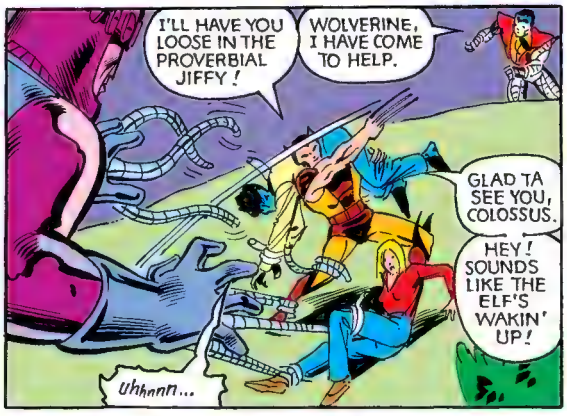

'MANDA, ELF, YOU GUYS OKAY?!
I'M FINE, WOLVERINE, BUT KURT'S UNCONSCIOUS!
HEAD FOR THE HOUSE. WE'RE TOO VULNERABLE OUT HERE. I'LL LUG THE ELF. MOVE, DARLIN'!

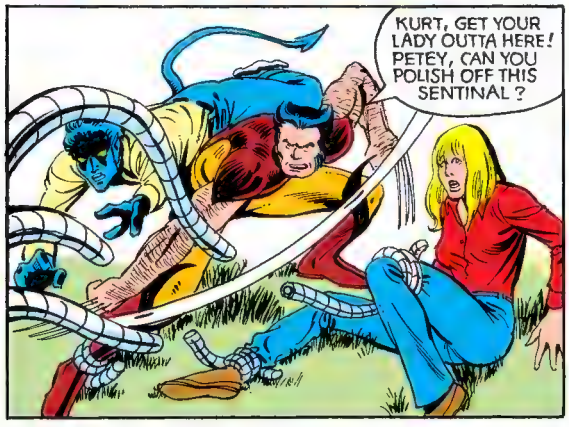

IF YOU FEEL A SLIGHT TINGLE INSIDE YOUR SKULL, THAT'LL BE CHARLEY--USIN' HIS PSI-POWERS TO KEEP TRACK OF US.
WHEN WE'RE IN RANGE, HE KEEPS A CONSTANT LOW-LEVEL RAPPORT WITH ALL THE X-MEN. THAT'S HOW HE KNEW YOU TWO WERE UNDER ATTAK. 'MANDA, WHAT'RE YOU STARIN' AT? WHAT'S WRONG?
THAT ROBOT, WOLVERINE--

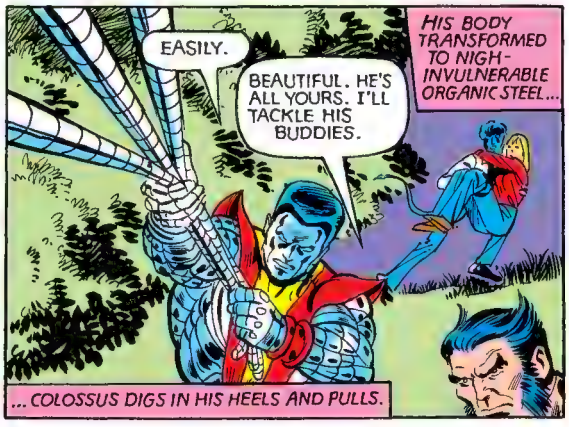

--IT DIDN'T COME ALONE!
WHAT ARE THEY, WOLVERINE? WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH US?
THEY'RE SENTINELS, SWEETHEART--MECHANICAL MUTANT-HUNTERS. AN', MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, ASSASSINS AS WELL.
SHOOT! CYKE'S ZAP BEAM DIDN'T EVEN SCRATCH THAT SUCKER'S PAINT!

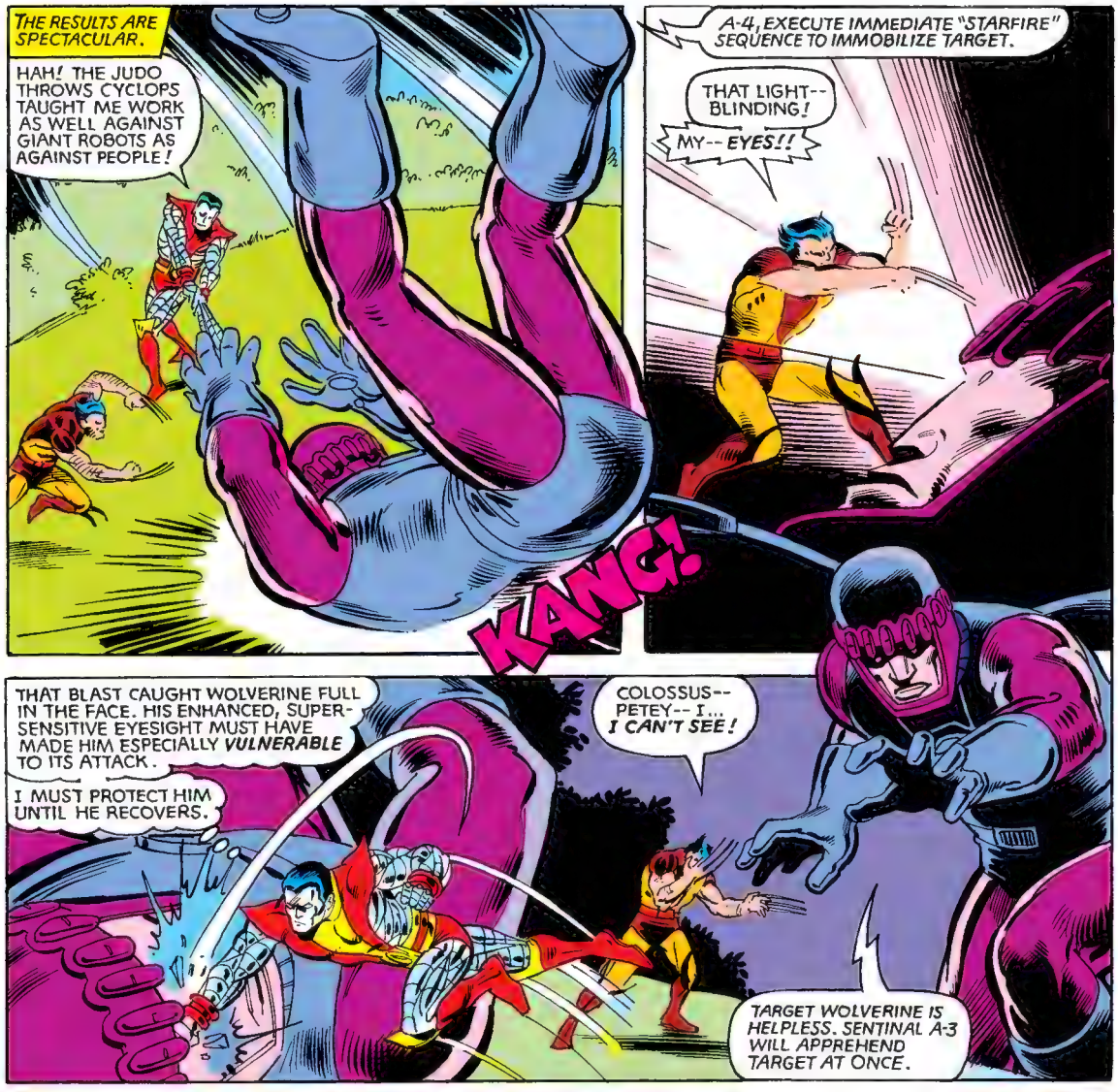

IN A SECRET CONTROL CENTER FAR BENEATH THE HELLFIRE CLUB, SEBASTIAN SHAW MONITORS AND CONTROLS THE PROGRESS OF HIS MECHANOID CREATIONS.
WE'VE RUN A SCAN ON WOLVERINE, SIR. HIS BONES ARE LACED WITH ADAMANTIUM, MAKING THEM ESSENTIALLY UNBREAKABLE. HE ALSO POSSESSES ADAMANTIUM CLAWS...
...WHICH EXTEND THROUGH OPENINGS IN THE BACKS OF BOTH HANDS FROM HOUSINGS BUILT INTO HIS FOREARMS.
NEUTRALIZE HIM QUICKLY, TECHNO--BUT KEEP HIM ALIVE! HARRY LELAND HAS... PLANS FOR THAT PIPSQUEAK PSYCHOPATH.

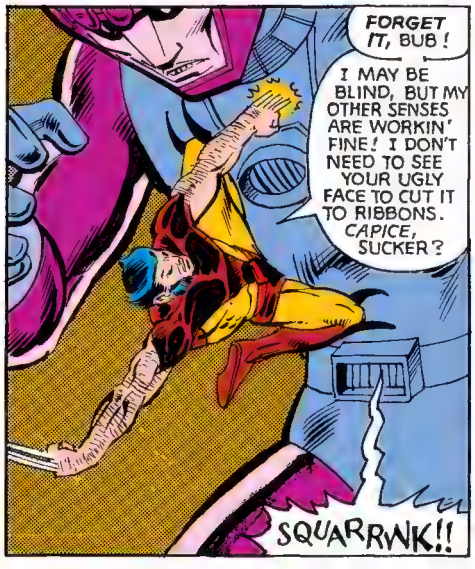
CABLES! I'M CAUGHT!
NO PROBLEM, 'MANDA.

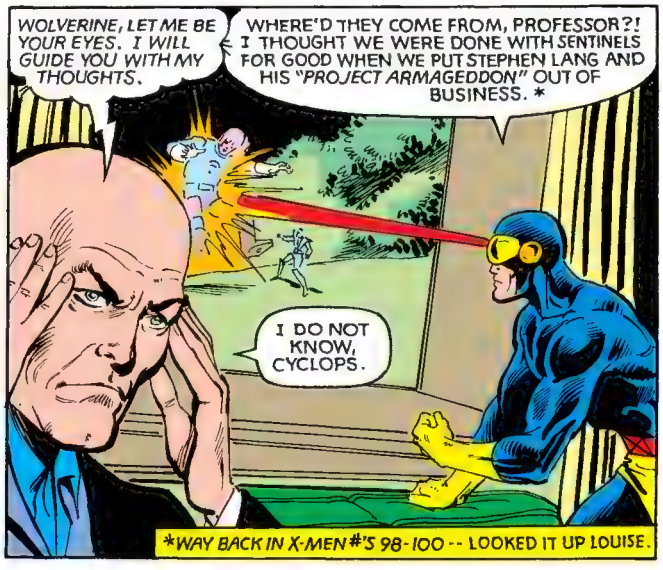

I'LL HAVE YOU LOOSE IN THE PROVERBIAL JIFFY!
WOLVERINE, I HAVE COME TO HELP.
GLAD TA SEE YOU, COLOSSUS.
HEY! SOUNDS LIKE THE ELF'S WAKIN' UP!
Uhhnnn...

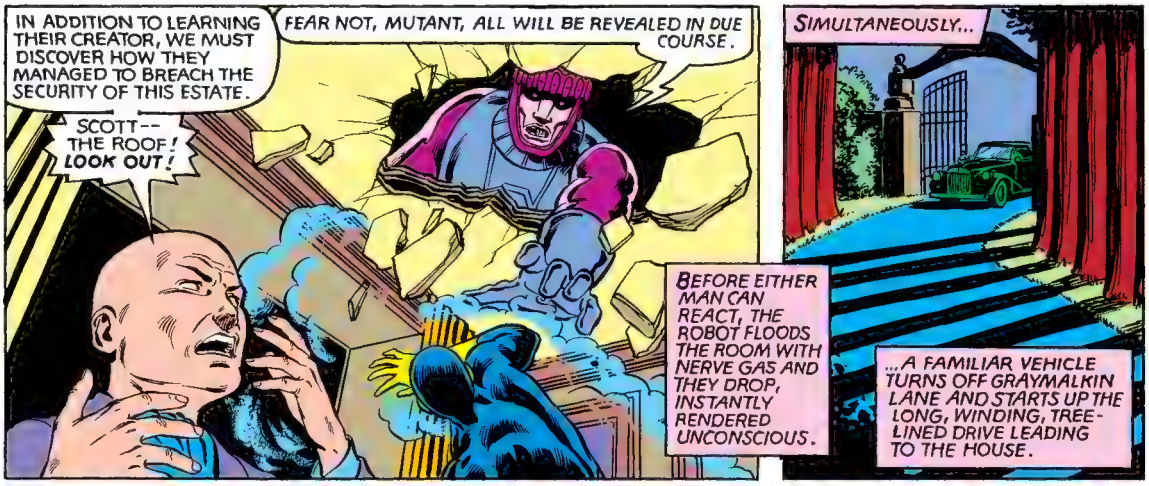

KURT, GET YOUR LADY OUTTA HERE! PETEY, CAN YOU POLISH OFF THIS SENTINAL?

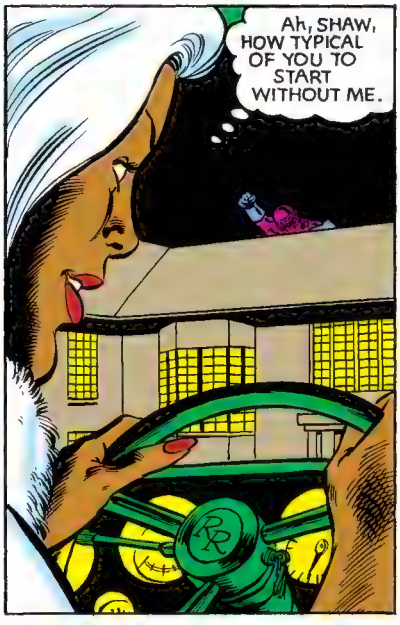

EASILY.
BEAUTIFUL. HE'S ALL YOURS. I'LL TACKLE HIS BUDDIES.
HIS BODY TRANSFORMED TO NIGH-INVULNERABLE ORGANIC STEEL...
...COLOSSUS DIGS IN HIS HEELS AND PULLS.


THE RESULTS ARE SPECTACULAR.
HAH! THE JUDO THROWS CYCLOPS TAUGHT ME WORK AS WELL AGAINST GIANT ROBOTS AS AGAINST PEOPLE!
A-4, EXECUTE IMMEDIATE "STARFIRE" SEQUENCE TO IMMOBILIZE TARGET.
THAT LIGHT-- BLINDING!
MY-- EYES!!
KANG!
THAT BLAST CAUGHT WOLVERINE FULL IN THE FACE. HIS ENHANCED, SUPER-SENSITIVE EYESIGHT MUST HAVE MADE HIM ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE TO ITS ATTACK.
I MUST PROTECT HIM UNTIL HE RECOVERS.
COLOSSUS-- PETEY-- I... I CAN'T SEE!
TARGET WOLVERINE IS HELPLESS. SENTINAL A-3 WILL APPREHEND TARGET AT ONCE.

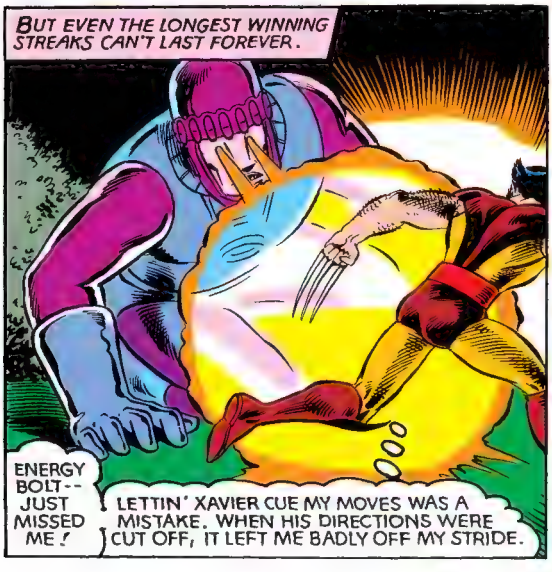

FORGET IT, BUB!
I MAY BE BLIND, BUT MY OTHER SENSES ARE WORKIN' FINE! I DON'T NEED TO SEE YOUR UGLY FACE TO CUT IT TO RIBBONS. CAPICE, SUCKER?
SQUARRWK!!

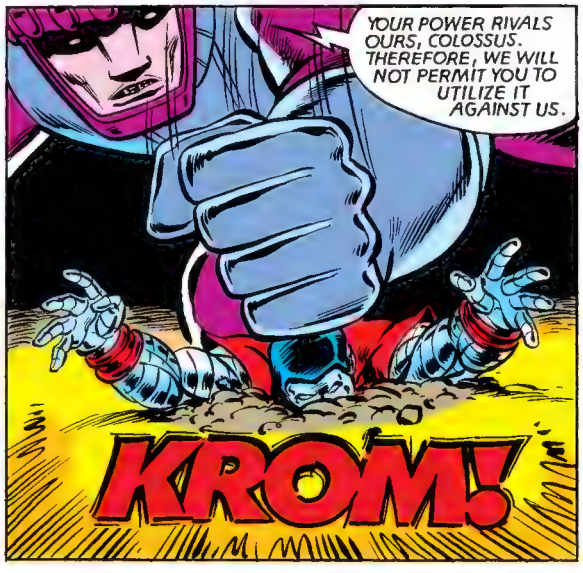

WOLVERINE, LET ME BE YOUR EYES. I WILL GUIDE YOU WITH MY THOUGHTS.
WHERE'D THEY COME FROM, PROFESSOR?! I THOUGHT WE WERE DONE WITH SENTINELS FOR GOOD WHEN WE PUT STEPHEN LANG AND HIS "PROJECT ARMAGEDDON" OUT OF BUSINESS. *
I DO NOT KNOW, CYCLOPS.
*WAY BACK IN X-MEN #'S 98-100 -- LOOKED IT UP LOUISE.


IN ADDITION TO LEARNING THEIR CREATOR, WE MUST DISCOVER HOW THEY MANAGED TO BREACH THE SECURITY OF THIS ESTATE.
FEAR NOT, MUTANT, ALL WILL BE REVEALED IN DUE COURSE.
SCOTT-- THE ROOF! LOOK OUT!
BEFORE EITHER MAN CAN REACT, THE ROBOT FLOODS THE ROOM WITH NERVE GAS AND THEY DROP, INSTANTLY RENDERED UNCONSCIOUS.
SIMULTANEOUSLY...
...A FAMILIAR VEHICLE TURNS OFF GRAYMALKIN LANE AND STARTS UP THE LONG, WINDING, TREE-LINED DRIVE LEADING TO THE HOUSE.


Ah, SHAW, HOW TYPICAL OF YOU TO START WITHOUT ME.

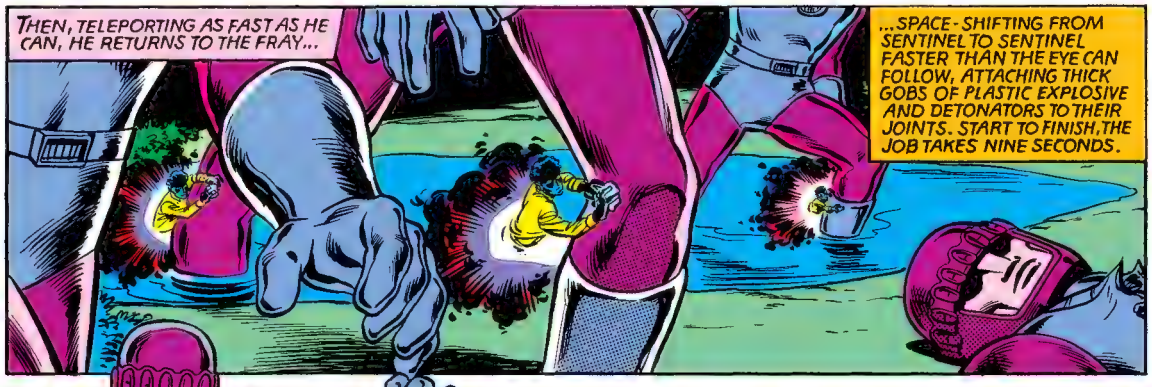
DO YOU HOPE THAT YOUR PRECIOUS TOYS CAN DEFEAT THE X-MEN SINGLE-HANDEDLY, THEREBY RENDERING MY PLAN TO INFILTRATE THEM POINTLESS.
THE X-MEN HAVE FOUGHT THE SENTINELS BEFORE-- AND TRIUMPHED EVERY TIME.
I WISH YOU LUCK, MY DARLING, BECAUSE I THINK YOU'LL NEED IT.


BUT EVEN THE LONGEST WINNING STREAKS CAN'T LAST FOREVER.
ENERGY BOLT-- JUST MISSED ME!
LETTIN' XAVIER CUE MY MOVES WAS A MISTAKE. WHEN HIS DIRECTIONS WERE CUT OFF, IT LEFT ME BADLY OFF MY STRIDE.

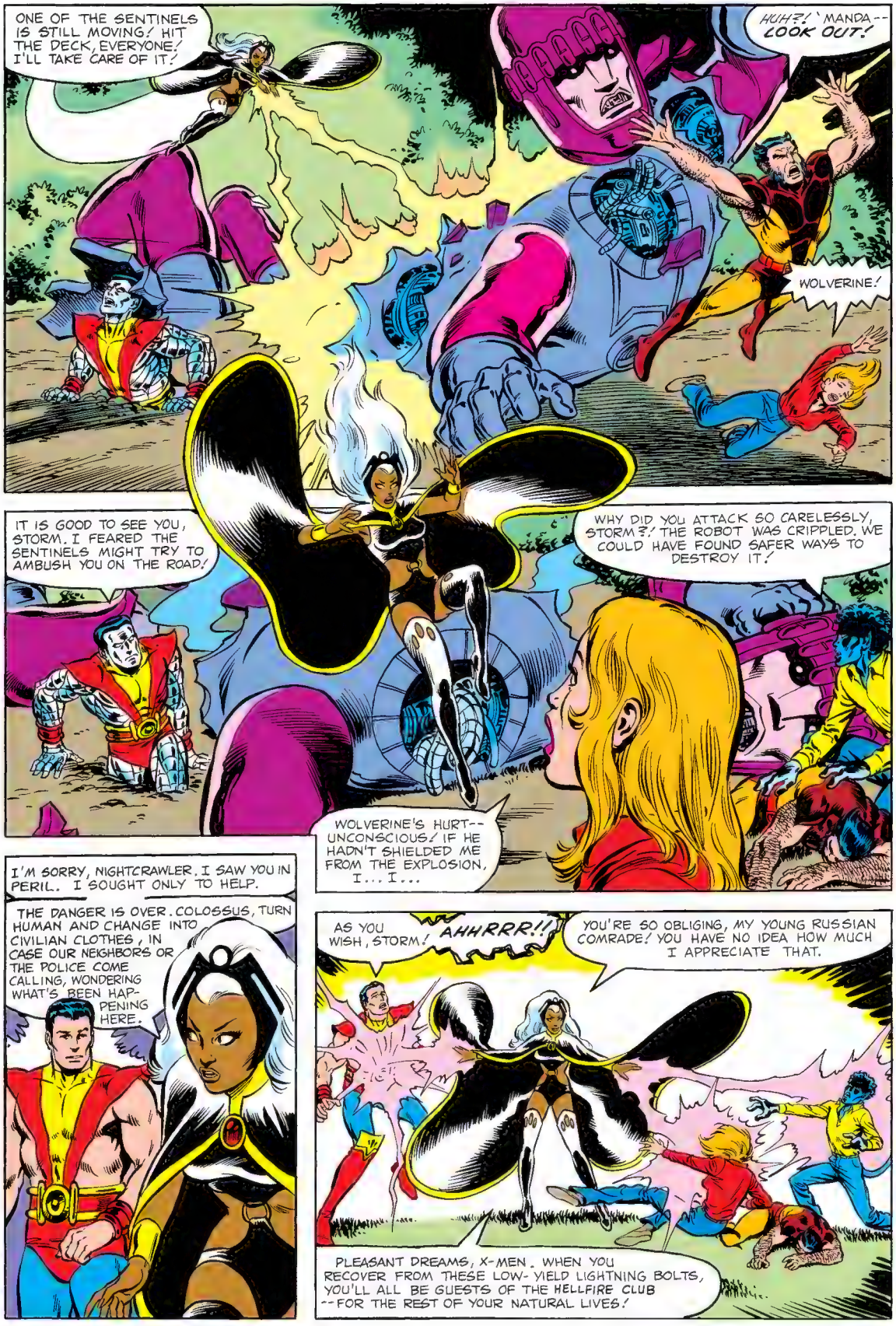

YOUR POWER RIVALS OURS, COLOSSUS. THEREFORE, WE WILL NOT PERMIT YOU TO UTILIZE IT AGAINST US.
KROM!

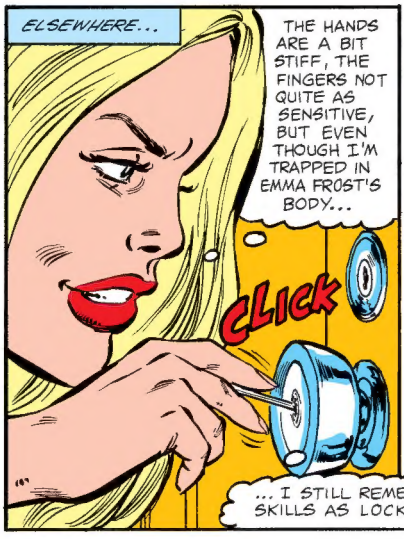
COLOSSUS IS STUCK, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT.
WOLVIE, 'MANDA, HEAD FOR THE TREES. THE SENTINELS WILL HAVE TROUBLE TRACKING AND CAPTURING YOU THERE.
KURT, WHAT ABOUT YOU?!

WITHOUT ANSWERING, NIGHTCRAWLER TELEPORTS TO THE X-MEN'S ARMORY, STOCKED WITH MYRIAD VARIETIES OF ESOTERIC, DEADLY WEAPONRY.
THIS CASE OF PLASTIQUE SHOULD DO THE TRICK NICELY.


THEN, TELEPORTING AS FAST AS HE CAN, HE RETURNS TO THE FRAY...
...SPACE-SHIFTING FROM SENTINEL TO SENTINEL FASTER THAN THE EYE CAN FOLLOW, ATTACHING THICK GOBS OF PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE AND DETONATORS TO THEIR JOINTS. START TO FINISH, THE JOB TAKES NINE SECONDS.

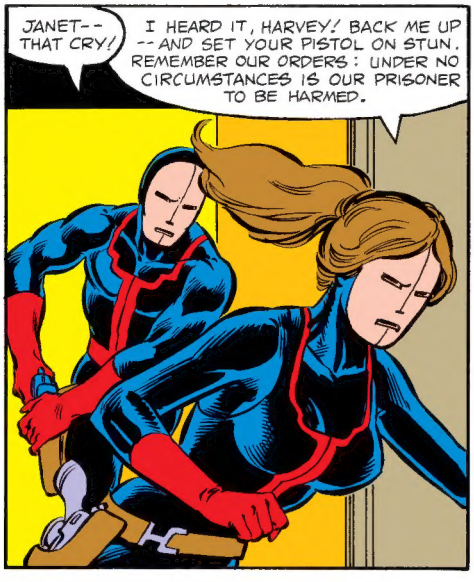
HE'D SET THE DETONATORS FOR TEN.

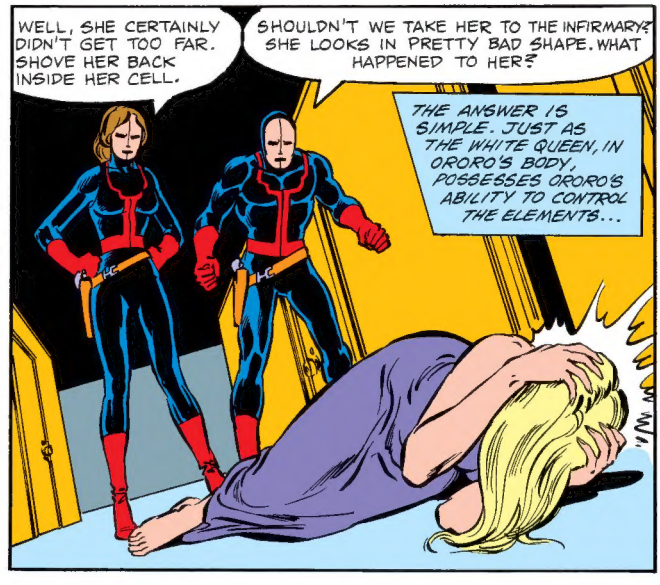

ONE OF THE SENTINELS IS STILL MOVING! HIT THE DECK, EVERYONE! I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT!
HUH?! 'MANDA-- LOOK OUT!
WOLVERINE!
IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU, STORM. I FEARED THE SENTINELS MIGHT TRY TO AMBUSH YOU ON THE ROAD!
WHY DID YOU ATTACK SO CARELESSLY, STORM?! THE ROBOT WAS CRIPPLED. WE COULD HAVE FOUND SAFER WAYS TO DESTROY IT!
WOLVERINE'S HURT-- UNCONSCIOUS! IF HE HADN'T SHIELDED ME FROM THE EXPLOSION, I... I...
I'M SORRY, NIGHTCRAWLER. I SAW YOU IN PERIL. I SOUGHT ONLY TO HELP.
THE DANGER IS OVER. COLOSSUS, TURN HUMAN AND CHANGE INTO CIVILIAN CLOTHES, IN CASE OUR NEIGHBORS OR THE POLICE COME CALLING, WONDERING WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING HERE.
AS YOU WISH, STORM!
AHHRRR!!
YOU'RE SO OBLIGING, MY YOUNG RUSSIAN COMRADE! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH I APPRECIATE THAT.
PLEASANT DREAMS, X-MEN. WHEN YOU RECOVER FROM THESE LOW-YIELD LIGHTNING BOLTS, YOU'LL ALL BE GUESTS OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB --FOR THE REST OF YOUR NATURAL LIVES!

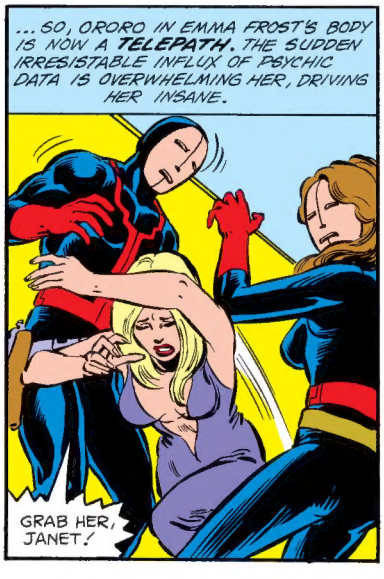

ELSEWHERE...
THE HANDS ARE A BIT STIFF, THE FINGERS NOT QUITE AS SENSITIVE, BUT EVEN THOUGH I'M TRAPPED IN EMMA FROST'S BODY...
CLICK
... I STILL REMEMBER MY SKILLS AS LOCKPICK!

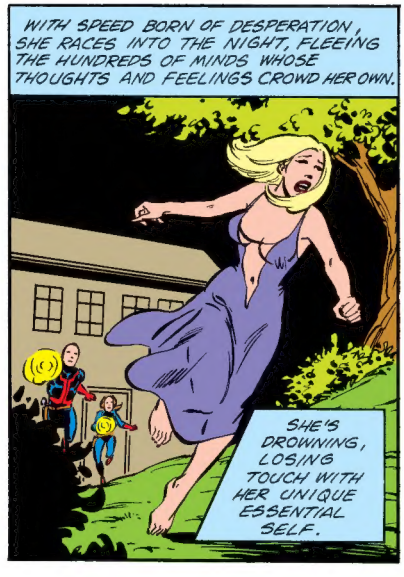
THAT'S OPENED THE DOOR. NOW TO...
DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING?
WHAT WAS THAT?!
HOW DID I EVER GET PARTNERED WITH SUCH A JERK?
VOICES-- INSIDE MY HEAD!

OTHER PEOPLES' THOUGHTS--FROM ALL OVER THE CAMPUS-- CRASHING IN ON ME!

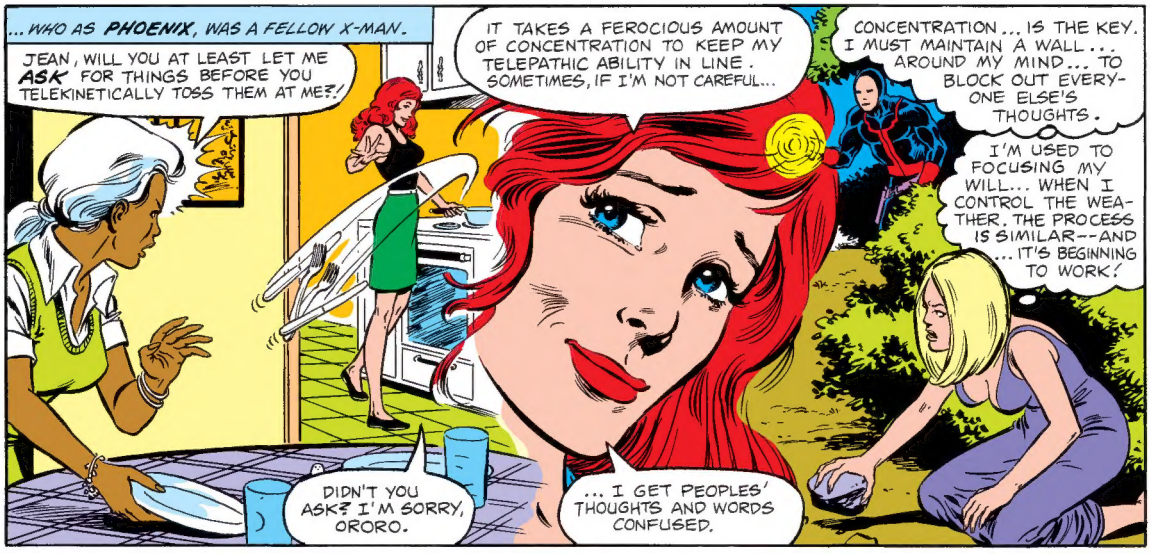

JANET-- THAT CRY!
I HEARD IT, HARVEY! BACK ME UP --AND SET YOUR PISTOL ON STUN. REMEMBER OUR ORDERS: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS OUR PRISONER TO BE HARMED.

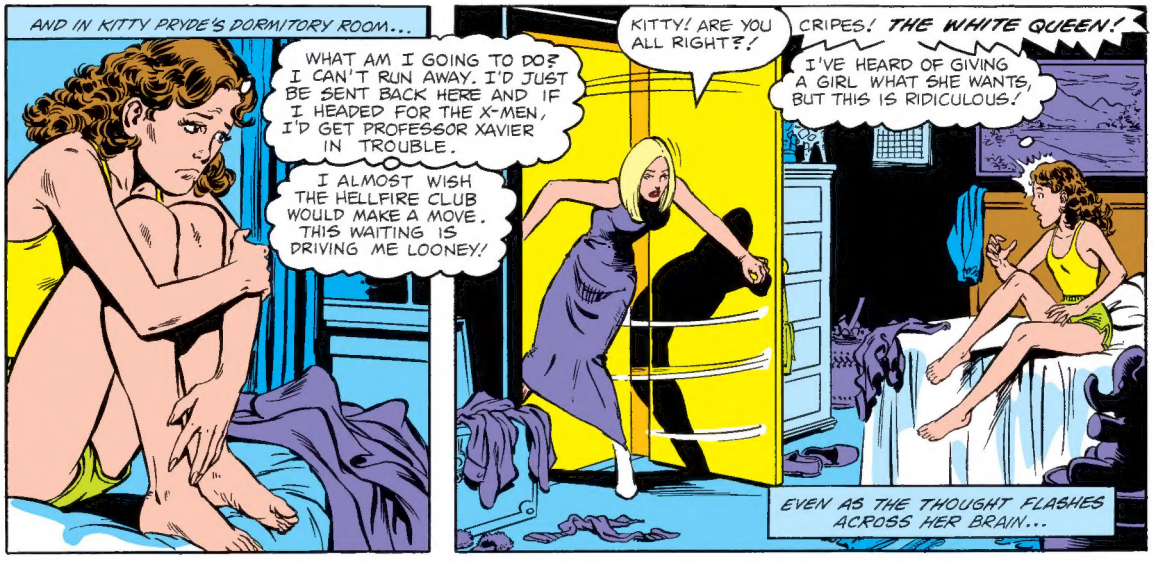

WELL, SHE CERTAINLY DIDN'T GET TOO FAR. SHOVE HER BACK INSIDE HER CELL.
SHOULDN'T WE TAKE HER TO THE INFIRMARY? SHE LOOKS IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE. WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?
THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE. JUST AS THE WHITE QUEEN, IN ORORO'S BODY, POSSESSES ORORO'S ABILITY TO CONTROL THE ELEMENTS...


...SO, ORORO IN EMMA FROST'S BODY IS NOW A TELEPATH. THE SUDDEN IRRESISTABLE INFLUX OF PSYCHIC DATA IS OVERWHELMING HER, DRIVING HER INSANE.
GRAB HER, JANET!

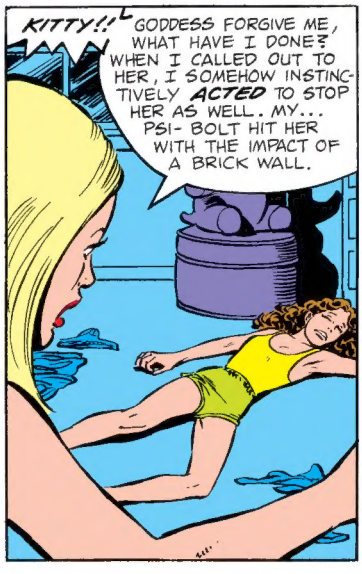

WITH SPEED BORN OF DESPERATION, SHE RACES INTO THE NIGHT, FLEEING THE HUNDREDS OF MINDS WHOSE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS CROWD HER OWN.
SHE'S DROWNING, LOSING TOUCH WITH HER UNIQUE ESSENTIAL SELF.

REALITY BLURS, TWISTS, REFORMS, AS ORORO SEEKS SALVATION IN HER MEMORIES. SHE FLASHES BACK TO A LONG-AGO EVENING IN THE GREENWICH VILLAGE APARTMENT OF HER DEAREST FRIEND, JEAN GREY...


...WHO AS PHOENIX, WAS A FELLOW X-MAN.
JEAN, WILL YOU AT LEAST LET ME ASK FOR THINGS BEFORE YOU TELEKINETICALLY TOSS THEM AT ME?!
DIDN'T YOU ASK? I'M SORRY, ORORO.
IT TAKES A FEROCIOUS AMOUNT OF CONCENTRATION TO KEEP MY TELEPATHIC ABILITY IN LINE. SOMETIMES, IF I'M NOT CAREFUL...
...I GET PEOPLES' THOUGHTS AND WORDS CONFUSED.
CONCENTRATION... IS THE KEY. I MUST MAINTAIN A WALL... AROUND MY MIND... TO BLOCK OUT EVERYONE ELSE'S THOUGHTS.
I'M USED TO FOCUSING MY WILL... WHEN I CONTROL THE WEATHER. THE PROCESS IS SIMILAR--AND ...IT'S BEGINNING TO WORK!


AND IN KITTY PRYDE'S DORMITORY ROOM...
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO? I CAN'T RUN AWAY. I'D JUST BE SENT BACK HERE AND IF I HEADED FOR THE X-MEN, I'D GET PROFESSOR XAVIER IN TROUBLE.
I ALMOST WISH THE HELLFIRE CLUB WOULD MAKE A MOVE. THIS WAITING IS DRIVING ME LOONEY!
KITTY! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
CRIPES! THE WHITE QUEEN!
I'VE HEARD OF GIVING A GIRL WHAT SHE WANTS, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS!
EVEN AS THE THOUGHT FLASHES ACROSS HER BRAIN...

...KITTY DIVES OFF THE BED, MEANING TO PHASE THROUGH THE FLOOR AND ESCAPE...
CHILD--DON'T STOP!
WUNNGFF!


KITTY!!
GODDESS FORGIVE ME, WHAT HAVE I DONE? WHEN I CALLED OUT TO HER, I SOMEHOW INSTINCTIVELY ACTED TO STOP HER AS WELL. MY... PSI-BOLT HIT HER WITH THE IMPACT OF A BRICK WALL.

I CAME TO SAVE THIS CHILD I LOVE--
--AND INSTEAD I MAY HAVE KILLED HER!
NEXT. TO BE CONCLUDED...IN THE HELLFIRE GAMBIT!

X-MAIL

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

LOUISE JONES
EDITOR
DANNY FINGEROTH
ASSISTANT EDITOR

For those of you who might have felt just a wee bit disconcerted by the new names listed as pencilers on this issue, some reassurance. What with one thing and another — especially our double-sized 150th issue extravaganza — schedules on the X-MEN have gotten hectic of late. So, to buy all concerned time to do their best work, Louise suggested giving a chance to some talented guys who've been clamoring to try their hands on this mag. Dave is already hard at work on X-MEN #153 and as near as we can determine, it should be quite... unlike anything seen before in this book. 'Til then, enjoy the goodies being presented courtesy of Jim Sherman, Bob McLeod and our stalwart favorite, Josef Rubinstein.

Dear Mr. Claremont:

Your creation of Kitty Pryde is marvelous! I really love her personality, innocence, etc. I love your idea about Kitty's age: 13 1/2 years old. The age is absolutely perfect! This age is the average age of the Marvel readers. I love her eyes because they are wide-eyed. It gives me a special feeling of innocence, *but* I think Kitty Pryde needs improvement.

Her personality is too "wishy-washy" or "goody-goody." No teenager her age is "goody-goody" in this generation. This generation is very different. All the teenagers Kitty's age are involved in school, friends and of course — *drugs!* How come Kitty doesn't go to school like everybody else? How come she doesn't have friends her age? You must create Kitty's views of everything, like drugs, sex, friends, career, school, etc. It will give popularity to the comic because all the readers are living in the real world. The X-Men don't; they are living in the imaginary world.

I think you should write a long story (3 issues or more) about Kitty getting involved in drugs like marijuana, alcohol, etc. I know there is a ban on printing drug stories in the comic books, but I think you should because it will save a lot of lives. This story is not a dream. This story will give a special notice about how bad drugs are.

I'm not a junkie, user or pothead. I'm clean. I don't like to see some teenagers my age get involved in drugs and risk their lives. I really want you to tell the world how bad drugs are. If you print that, it will make the readers think about drugs and *will* save a lot of lives!

Amy Cohen, Age 14
693 E. 58th St.
Brooklyn, NY 11234

Thanks for your moving thoughts, Amy. There are a multitude of problems facing young people of your — and Kitty's — age today. And, though the kid may be getting better and better at facing down monstrous mutant menaces, she's still got to deal with the same conflicts and crises of growing up as anyone her age does. Which is what makes here so fascinating to us, and — judging from our mail — to you. So, as time goes by, you can bet we'll see Kitty confronting these dilemmas, including the ones you mentioned.

Dear Marvel,

In X-MEN #145, Cyclops is washed ashore without his glasses on. He rips his shirt to make a blindfold to hold back his optic beams, but only the ruby quartz lenses of his glasses are able to hold back his optic beams. Try to explain that. I will be expecting my No-Prize in the mail soon.

Michael Variella
280-66 Belmont Ave.
East Islip, NY 11730

Sorry, Mike, we have an explanation. Scott can also hold his optic blasts in check by simply shutting his eyes. The blindfold was intended to make sure that his eyes stay shut and that he couldn't open them, even a little, even by accident.

Dear Chris,

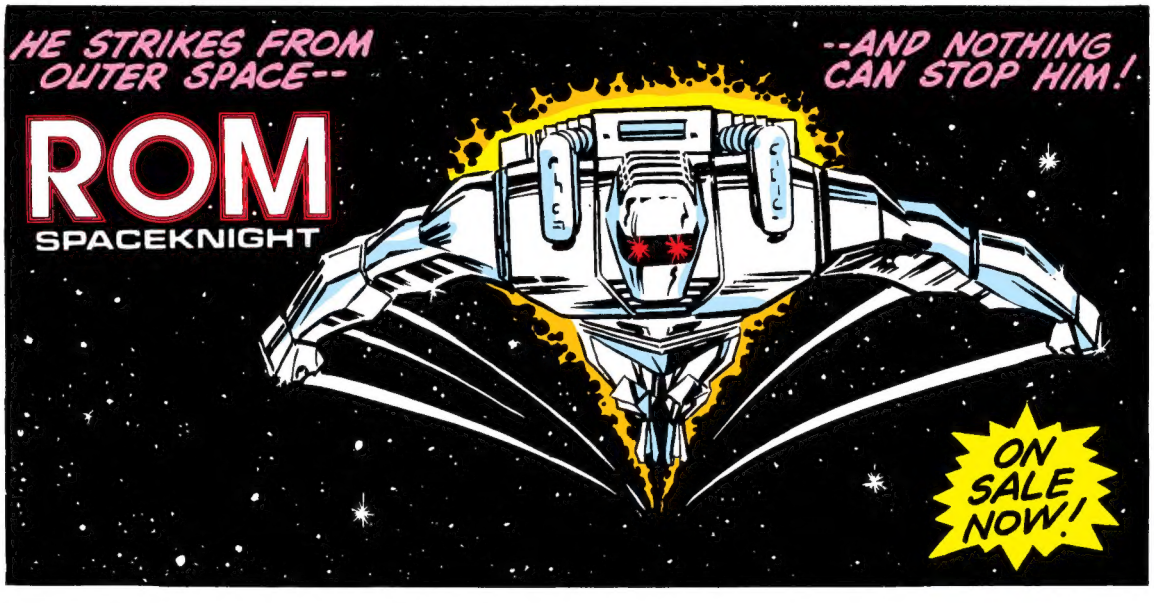
First, I'd like to welcome Dave Cockrum back. I really loved Byrne and Austin's work but give me a little time to get used to you again, Dave, because I'm sure you're going to do just great (again)!

The story in issue #145 was all right. Ororo's interest in Dr. Doom both surprised and fascinated me. She seems to have little interest in the opposite sex except as friends and for her to be so drawn to Doom is a very interesting insight into her character.

Also, it seems about time for us to hear from Corsair again. What's the word on him?

Cathy Birdsong
2717 Deer Creek Dr. #109
Arlington, Texas 76010

Funny you should mention Corsair, Cathy, because it is indeed time Marveldom Assembled heard from him again. In fact, he'll be making his long-awaited reappearance in a matter of months — X-MEN #154, to be precise — by dropping in on Cyclops and Storm. And we do mean *dropping in*!



MINUTEMEN

Sy13nt
Bob